



Bancroft's School

Curriculum Policy 2018-19

Updated by JTS Nov 2018

Overview

The curriculum at Bancroft's aims to fulfil the school's objective of providing a "broad, balanced and forward-looking curriculum relevant to the aspirations of the students and their parents together with a wide-ranging programme of opportunities both within and outside the school day".

In particular, the curriculum aims to ensure that:

- Pupils have an experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physics and aesthetic and creative education.
- Subject matter is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils, including those pupils with a statement.
- Where a pupil has a statement, the education at Bancroft's fulfils its requirements
- Pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills
- The personal, social and health education reflects the school's aims and ethos
- Appropriate careers guidance is given to pupils receiving secondary education
- For all pupils, including those above compulsory school age, the programme of activities is appropriate to their needs
- All pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress
- Pupils are adequately prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

The school provides a stimulating and relevant curriculum for students aged 11 – 18 who have passed selective entrance procedures. The curriculum broadly follows the National Curriculum but extends it to provide what we feel is appropriate breadth and challenge for our students. It should be noted that the students develop and benefit from being in Bancroft's as much from the co-curriculum as the academic curriculum: sports, the CCF and DofE scheme, activities, study trips, societies, music, drama, chapel, assemblies, the house system, etc. are all an important part of what we offer. Between the curriculum and co-curriculum, the opportunities offered by the house system, chapel, assemblies as well as in collective worship focusing on religions other than the Christian faith, we believe we give students the opportunity to be educated in a wide ranging and holistic way.

The curriculum is designed to be broad and balanced, in particular from 11-16, so that decisions to specialise at Sixth Form level and beyond have not been prohibited by choices made at earlier points in the school. This broad and balanced nature ensures that students are given the experience they require in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education.

Our core curriculum ensures that students acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy. From years 7 through to 11 all students study English Literature and Language, Maths, at least one Modern Foreign Language and all three Sciences.

The development of pupils as responsible and informed citizens, and the fostering of spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, is at the heart of the whole educational experience at Bancroft's. Preparing students for later life and the challenges and decisions they will need to make as adults is an important part of the education at the school. Personal, Social and Health education within the PSHE programme is one way in which these objectives are met. In addition to PSHE sessions there are other opportunities both on the curriculum and in co-curricular activities where this education can take place such as assemblies, chapel talks, societies, study trips and within many academic subjects.

All pupils in years 7 – 11 have weekly or fortnightly lessons in PSHE with their tutor. Each year has a scheme of work which develops from the years covered before, and fits to that particular age group. Every year group has a Convener who is in charge of the scheme for the year and gives resources and training, where needed, to members of the tutor team delivering the PSHE. External speakers are used within the programme where appropriate. Students in year 12 have a fortnightly lecture series, which covers PSHE, University & Careers, talks to create or further interest, etc.

Religious Studies is in the core curriculum in years 7 – 9 and within it the range of world religions are studied along with human and social issues relating to each.

Career guidance for students occurs within the PSHE programmes, extra information evenings and also by tutors and house staff. Information evenings for GCSE and A-level options are held and students in year 10 are offered the opportunity to take the Morrisby careers test and associated interview. Each student will have an individual interview with their housemaster in the run-up to choosing GCSE or A-level options, and tutors give additional advice. In the Sixth Form there are information evenings on the UCAS process as well as talks housed within the L6th lecture series. Students are offered the opportunity to have practice interviews. Assistance is given to pupils who would like to do work experience in the Fifth or Sixth Form including summer placements.

Although there are currently no students with statements at Bancroft's there are a number who are recognised with having learning differences and who require some support. Students who the school recognises could usefully get supported are, even if there is not as yet an identified learning difference. All of these are looked after by the learning support department and Individual Plans are drawn up for students on the learning support register. The learning support department offer drop-in times for any pupil in the school and pupils with identified learning differences in years 7-11 are withdrawn from either one lesson a week or once a fortnight to be given more individual support within the department. The subject

from which the pupil is withdrawn is varied throughout the year. In the Sixth Form, support is given in a study period.

When students join the school they undergo a screening test for literacy-based learning issues and cases followed up on, as required. The students also sit the MidYIS test, the results of which are also looked at carefully as a separate indicator of aspects that may need further investigation.

Bancroft's selects pupils at entrance partly according to their ability in written English. It is therefore only very occasionally that individuals are admitted who have some problems arising from having English as an additional language.

Such pupils are treated according to their individual needs, and their welfare and progress is overseen by house staff in liaison with the learning support department.

Departmental schemes of work and guidance are designed so that all students have the opportunity to learn and make progress. Learning and progress are monitored regularly, are recorded by staff, and reported by the school's half-termly grades. The progress of all students is evaluated by heads of section, house staff, and tutors, and interviews with students are arranged as appropriate.

A system of academic tracking exists for all students in order to identify those students who are underperforming and require support. Regular dialogue between the tutor, head of section, house staff and student ensures that targets are set and followed-up. There is also a system of daily report-cards for students that temporarily would benefit from the narrower focus and more immediate feedback.

Curriculum by Year

The school day is based on a two week cycle with each day having eight 35-minute lessons each day. These are a combination of single and double periods depending on the subject preference.

In years 7 – 11 students have a lesson provision of around 24 hours a week. The subject breakdown varies by year, as detailed separately below.

Third Form (year 7)

The table below shows the number of 35minute lessons per subject or activity over the two week cycle, out of a total of eighty lessons.

English (9)	Maths (9)	Science (8)	German (6)	Spanish (6)
Geography (5)	History (5)	R.S (5)	Drama (3)	Art (4)
Music (3)	Technology (4)	P.E (4)	Games (6)	PSHE (2)
ICT (1)				

Students are set broadly by ability in Maths. In other subjects, classes are mixed ability and set in common between subjects according to two clusters. One cluster is for English, Science, History, Geography, Religious Studies, and ICT where the average class size is 24. The other cluster is for Art, Drama, Music, Technology, German and Spanish, where average class size is 18.

Technology in the Third Form contains half a year of D.T. and half a year of Electronics. As well as a timetabled lesson of ICT and programming, ICT skills are also taught through the curriculum, and the Heads of Computer Science and E Learning work alongside departments to support their work.

PSHE is taught by house throughout the school by the Form Tutor and in the case of the Third Form, also the junior housestaff. The forms are around 15 in size, which allows the tutor to get to know them well and to support them effectively. The students meet their form tutor twice a day. Form tutors act as the first point of contact between home and school.

The PE curriculum also contains swimming lessons and special attention is given to weak or unconfident swimmers within the programme.

Pupils in the Thirds have their end of year examinations before the May half-term so that the half-term is used for a break and is not for revision.

Removes (year 8)

English (8)	Maths (8)	Science (8)	R.S. (5)
(MFL) 2 x (5) French/German/Spanish	Geography (5)	History (5)	Drama (3)
Latin (6)	Technology (4)	Music (3)	
Art (4)	Games (6)	P.S.H.E (1)	
P.E. (4)			

The classes continue to be mixed ability except for Maths. As with the Third Form classes are arranged in common within two clusters and are re-set from the Third Form to allow for new relationships to forge. ICT skills are taught through the curriculum, and the Heads of Computer Science and E Learning work alongside departments to support their work.

Technology in the Removes contains half a year of DT and half a year of Computer Programming.

Pupils in the Removes have their end of year examinations before the May half-term so that the half-term is used for a break and is not for revision.

Lower-Fourth Form (year 9)

Students make language choices and pick two creative and technical options as shown in the table below.

Core	English (8) Physics (5) PE (3)	Maths (8) Geography (5) Games (6)	Biology (5) History (5) PSHE (1)	Chemistry (5) RS (5)
Language Choices:				
Options	MFL: (5) One to be chosen: French German Spanish	Classical: (5) One to be chosen from: Classics Latin <i>(Classics has no language component and is not a necessary precursor to GCSE Classical Civilisation)</i>	Mixed Block: (6) One to be chosen from: French German Russian * Spanish Classics Classical Greek * Latin <i>*(Russian and Classical Greek are from beginner level, which is why this last block has an extra lesson a fortnight)</i>	Creative and Technical: (4) Two to be chosen from: Art Music Design Technology Electronics Computer Programming

Except for Maths, classes continue to be mixed ability, with the option subjects classed according to pupil choices. The Science lessons are now split into Physics, Chemistry and Biology, each having a specialist teacher.

The Lower-Fourth end of year exams are just before the May half-term break so that the half-term is used for a break and is not for revision.

Upper-Fourth Form (year 10)

The vast majority of students take 10 GCSE subjects at the end of year 11. Both English Literature and Language are done to GCSE. The timetable is designed around the student choices, rather than choices confined to set option blocks. It is rare for there to be any students who cannot have their four option choices.

English, Physics, Chemistry and Biology at this stage have classes set broadly by ability.

Core	English (10)	Maths (10)	Biology (6)	Chemistry (6)
	Physics (6)	PE (3)	Games (6)	P.S.H.E (1)
Options	4 x (8)	Art	Classical Civilisation	Drama
		Design Technology	Electronics	French
		Geography	German	Classical Greek
		History	Latin	Music
		Religious Studies	Russian	Spanish
		Computer Science	PE	

One option choice must be a Modern Foreign Language, unless a student chooses to do both Classical Greek and Latin. They may then choose two other subjects that do not include a Modern Foreign Language.

The top two sets for Maths are accelerated and take their GCSE at the end of the Upper-Fourth year.

GCSE class sizes are on average 20 in size, both in the core curriculum and optional curriculum. No option subject will have class sizes of more than 24 students, with the limit being 18 for Creative and Technical Subjects.

Fifth Form (year 11)

The two classes accelerated Maths classes continue with Maths to a higher level in the Fifth Form, splitting into three classes to study Additional Maths, sitting the Free Standing Maths Qualification (FSMQ) at the end of the year.

In the Fifth Form, a small number of students will move to a set focussed on preparing for Combined Science (Trilogy Award), although students are still taught separately by Biology, Chemistry and Physics specialists. The other science sets work towards three separate GCSEs.

Core	English (11)	Maths (10)	Biology (6)	Chemistry (6)
	PE (2)	Games (6)	PSHE (1)	Physics (6)
Options	4 x (8)	Art	Classical Civilisation	Drama
		Design Technology	Electronics	French
		Geography	German	Classical Greek
		History	Latin	Music
		Religious Studies	Russian	Spanish

The PE course in the Fifth Form has a particular focus on health and fitness for life.

Lower Sixth Form (year 12)

As with GCSE options, the students choose their options first and then the timetable is designed to accommodate their options. This includes the options made by the 10 or so external students joining the sixth form.

Students start with 4 subjects of their choosing. If a student chooses to do Double Maths (Maths & Further Maths), this counts as one subject choice but leads to two A-levels with a few extra lessons and the expense of some study periods. Students who choose Double Maths may choose either two or three other courses.

A lecture series is organised by the Head of Sixth Form and consists of mainly external speakers. The range of talks is designed to interest and challenge, as well as to continue the students PSHE and Careers education.

Students considering Medical-based degrees and careers meet for a fortnightly timetabled Medics Group, where they find out more about these courses and careers as well as being given advice and support towards their applications.

Core	Lecture (1)	Games (6)		
Options	(16)	Art	Biology	Business Studies
		Classical Civilisation	Design Technology	Drama
		Electronics	English Literature	French
		German	Classical Greek	Politics
		Latin	Single Maths	Physics
		Religious Studies	Spanish	Economics
		Geography	Chemistry	Russian
		Double Maths **	History *	

*History students are given the option of studying either a Modern History course or a Medieval and Early Modern History course.

** Double Maths (Maths & Further Maths A-levels) counts as one option choice. This is taught on 20 periods in L6 and 26 in U6.

In the Summer Term of the L6, students sit internal exams. The results of these exams, along with performance throughout the year inform the School's predicted grades for university applications.

No public exams are sat at the end of the L6.

Upper Sixth Form (year 13)

The majority of students continue into the Upper Sixth year with three subjects for A2. They will then also choose an Additional Studies option; indicative courses are shown below. These courses are non-examined and are simply designed to stretch and enrich the students beyond the confines of the A-level curriculum. The precise courses offered will vary year-to-year depending on staffing and demand.

Additional Studies	<i>Indicative Courses:</i>		
	(4)		
	Musical Theatre	Photography	German
	Spanish	French	Earth Science
	Computer Programming	Russian	
	Law	Music Tech.	
	Astronomy	Intro to Carpentry / DIY	
	PPE for Medics	Architectural Design	
	EPQ IFS Certificate		
	How We Have Got Here (Historical Perspective Course)		

Those that continue with four subjects may also choose an Additional Studies option, but it is not mandatory for them to do so.

Homework and Marking

Students' work will be assessed regularly and thoroughly, and this information used to plan teaching so that pupils can progress. This assessment will include but need not be limited to the marking of homework.

Members of staff should ensure that any task that is set can be reasonably done in the time-allocation according to the homework timetable for that year. In more open tasks, clear guidance should be given to ensure that the right amount of time is spent by students.

Homework needs to be clearly set, and also set as a task on the VLE. Members of staff are encouraged not to wait until the end of the lesson to set the homework as this can be chaotic and make the task resemble an afterthought. Often it can be effective to tell the class about it at the beginning of the lesson

Homework should be collected at the first reasonable opportunity after it is set. Members of staff may not set work and expect it to be done by the next calendar day, even if a timetabled lesson occurs then. In the vast majority of cases the homework timetable is written to avoid this.

For the Thirds to Upper Fourths, extra homework or extended tasks are not set for any school holiday.

Thirds to Fifth Form

Homework should only be set on slots shown in the homework timetables. For the junior years (3rd – L4th), the setting of homework is not mandatory every slot.

Sixth Form

There is no published timetable, but subjects should generally set the equivalent of about 4 hours of work per week for the average pupil. The setting of work should be co-ordinated for groups which are shared between two or more teachers so that pupils are not put under unreasonable pressure. Deadlines for work should be set so as to allow students to plan their work and how it fits with their extra-curricular involvement.

Marking and Feedback

Departments have their own Marking Policies, as outlined in Department Handbooks. It is the policy of the school that for all year groups the work from students should be collected regularly and be marked promptly and returned to the pupil as soon as is reasonably possible - generally within a week. Pupils should be given constructive feedback where appropriate, in a way which is clear and can understood by the students.

Grades or marks do not necessarily need to be put on work which is returned to students, in fact members of staff are recommended to consider if comment-only marking would be more appropriate for the task. In any case, it is expected that records are kept of homework effort and achievement in markbooks, to monitor progress and give supporting evidence to half-termly grades or reports.

Heads of Department should ensure that new teachers to the school understand the expectations of work-setting and marking at Bancroft's and they should monitor the practice of the new member of staff, particularly during their first term.

Homework Loadings by Subject and Year: 2018-19:

Year	Average Loading
3rd form (year 7)	4 hours per week
Removes (year 8)	4.5 hours per week
L4th (year 9)	6.75 hours per week
U4th & 5 th (years 10 and 11)	9 hours per week
6th form (years 12 and 13)	4 hours per A-level per week (Double Maths is 6 hours per week)

Grading, Reporting, and Parents' Evenings

Grades or reports are sent home at regular intervals: grades normally each half term and a full report once a year. Parents' Evenings complement the written reports so that the parents receive either written or oral feedback at least twice a year.

Year	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Thirds	GC*	R	PE	GC	-	R
Removes	GC	PE	GC	R	-	R
Lower Fourth	GC	GC	R	PE + GC	-	R**
Upper Fourth	GC	GC + PE	GC	R	-	GC + PE
Fifths	GC	R	PE	R**	-	-
Lower Sixth	GC	GC + PE	GC	R	R**	PE
Upper Sixth	GC	GC + PE	GC	PE	-	R

PE = Parents' Evening

R = Report

GC = Grade Card

*At this stage only an Effort Grade is awarded to new Thirds.

** Academic grades and Co-Curricular reports are issued in the same document.

Reports

The purpose of a report is to encourage further progress by taking stock, as precisely as possible, of what has gone well and what has gone badly. Reports should convey the feeling that the member of staff knows that child and what their individual strengths and weaknesses are. Reports should be fair and avoid excessive criticism or praise. It is important that advice for the future deals with specific points, e.g. learning material, use of paragraphs, listening to instructions for practical work, reading exam questions carefully, etc.

Effort Grades

In the first half-term of the September the Thirds will be given only effort grades: it is good to report singularly on effort without pigeonholing achievement too early. All other year-groups will receive both effort and achievement in this first-grade session.

Effort grades are given for two strands: Classwork and Homework. Classwork will include aspects of work done in class, e.g. experiments & practical work, research in class, language conversation, class tasks, etc.

The descriptors are as follows:

Grade label	Description
X	excellent
V	very good
G	Good – working as expected
S	some concerns
U	serious concerns

The intention is that most students will be awarded a G or V for their work. X is attainable for all, but should be used sparingly, and for genuinely excellent work only that exceeds our already high expectations. S and U are such that some degree of action is needed to rectify the situation.

In the 3rds and Removes, the creative and technical subjects do not set regular homework and therefore do not give homework grades.

Achievement Grades

Exam Years Scale

For U4th – U6th, the grades map to descriptors of the standard that students are working towards as indicated by their performance since the last grade given. e.g. if a B is given to 6th form, then based on their current level of performance and a continuation of that, we would expect them to get a B at A-level.

Note these are not predictions, but statements of the level of performance at the time. There is inevitably an element of forecast, based on current trajectory, with all subjects, particularly those with a significant maturation factor.

a) Sixth Form Achievement Grades

Grade description	Grade label
A* grade standard at A-level	A*
A grade standard	A
A / B grade borderline	A / B
B grade standard	B
B / C grade standard	B / C
C grade standard	C
D grade standard	D
E grade standard	E
below E grade standard	U

b) GCSE Years Achievement Grades - From September 2016 many subjects started the new GCSE specifications. In August 2018, and from now on, 9-1 grades are awarded rather than A*-G. Accordingly, both the U4th and 5th Form are awarded numeric grades. All subjects will give grades to the U4th on the 9-3 scale, including 7.5 and 6.5.

Grade	Equivalent to
9	high A*
8	A*
7.5	A*/ A
7	A
6.5	A / B
6	B
5	B / C
4	C
3	beneath C

Grades 7.5 and 6.5 have been introduced to give more discrimination in Bancroft's grading. Bancroft's achievement grades do not go below 3 as it is extremely rare for pupils to be at this point for a subject, let alone the grades beneath them.

Junior Years Scale

For 3rd – L4th

Grade	Descriptor	Expanded Meaning
6	excellent	Work is outstanding in all respects
5	very good	Has demonstrated an impressive grasp of the subject
4	good	Coping with the work in most respects
3	competent	A basic grasp of the subject, with some minor difficulties
2	some concerns	Consistently experiencing difficulties, giving rise to concern over progress
1	major concerns	Serious difficulties in the subject.

Monitoring By Heads of Departments

Heads of Department are responsible for monitoring and ensuring that the teaching and learning in their department are of a good standard across all years and abilities. To assure themselves that this is the case, it is expected that they will monitor student progress and monitor and support the teachers within their department. Methods will include regular observations, work scrutiny, and departmental discussions. Heads of Department review the staff within their departments, sharing this responsibility in larger departments with other senior department leaders. Within this review process, targets are set and monitored in order to develop the capabilities of staff and enable the school to progress.