



## Curriculum Policy

**Bancroft's**  
Independent Co-educational Day School 7–18

## Contents

Overview.....	2
Curriculum by Year .....	4
Third Form (year 7) .....	4
Removes (year 8) .....	5
Lower-Fourth Form (year 9) .....	6
Upper-Fourth Form (year 10) .....	7
Fifth Form (year 11) .....	8
Sixth Form.....	9
Lower Sixth Form (year 12) .....	9
Extended Project Qualification (EPQ).....	10
Upper Sixth Form (year 13) .....	10
Homework and Marking.....	10
Thirds to Fifth Form .....	11
Sixth Form.....	11
Marking and Feedback.....	11
Homework Loadings by Year: 2023-2024.....	11
Grading, Reporting, and Parents' Evenings .....	12
Reports .....	12
Attitudes to Learning Grades (replacing previous Effort grades) .....	13
Achievement Grades.....	13
Monitoring by Heads of Departments.....	15
Use of CEM Data for Benchmarking and Value-Added Analysis .....	15

# Curriculum Policy

## 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, physical 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 an EHCP, 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 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.

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 Learning for Life programme, (LFL) is one way in which these objectives are met. In addition to the LFL 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, including those in the Sixth Form, now have weekly or fortnightly lessons in LFL. In most years, this takes place with a pupil's tutor. However, in years 9, 10 and 11 the school is trialing delivery of the LFL programme through a team of specialists. Each year has a scheme of work which develops from the years covered before, and fits to that particular age group. External speakers are used where appropriate. Students in the Sixth Form have a fortnightly lecture series in addition to Learning for Life, covering University & Careers, as well as talks that create or further interest in a diverse range of areas.

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

Careers guidance for students occurs within the LFL programmes; extra information is also provided via Higher Education and Careers 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/mistress 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. As part of their preparation for university applications 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.

The Learning Support department works with students who have an identified learning difference, or who we believe will benefit from extra support (even if a learning difference has not been identified). 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.

Departments run sessions to help pupils with curricular support where needed. There are also exam-focused sessions aimed at pupils in exam-years who may find access to additional support beneficial. There are also sessions aimed at preparing pupils for the various university admissions tests. Every department also offers a wide range of co-curricular and super-curricular clubs, giving pupils the opportunity to take up leadership roles or to enter a variety of competitions. Clubs give all pupils the chance to stretch their understanding, engage in meaningful debate and discover novel applications of their knowledge. These are all aimed at fostering scholarship, nurturing curiosity and giving every pupil the agency to pursue their interests.

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.

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, heads of year, 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 a narrower focus and more immediate feedback.

## Curriculum by Year

The school day is based on a two-week cycle with each day having six 50-minute lessons each day.

In years 7 – 11, students have a lesson provision of around 25 hours a week. The subject breakdown varies by year, as detailed separately below.

### **Third Form** (year 7)

The table below shows the number of 50-minute lessons per subject or activity over the two-week cycle, out of a total of 60 lessons.

English (6)	Maths (6)	Science (6)	MFL 1 (4)	MFL 2 (4)
Geography (4)	History (4)	RS (4)	Drama (2)	Art (3)
Music (2)	Technology (3)	PE (3)	Games (4)	LFL. (2)
ICT (1)	Enrichment (2)			

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, and Modern Foreign Languages, where the average class size is 18. MFL options are French, German and Spanish.

Technology in the Third Form contains mainly of DT, with elements 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.

Learning for Life is taught in tutor groups by the Form Tutor and 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.

In addition to their core curriculum, pupils in the Thirds and Removes follow the 'Lion Diploma' - this is a structured programme of enrichment and activities to bring meaningful breadth and stimulate intellectual curiosity to develop in our pupils the core skills to thrive as lifelong learners. This is bolstered by opportunities for service and volunteering, trips and visits, and sporting activities.

### **Removes** (year 8)

English (6)	Maths (6)	Science (6)	R.S. (3)
MFL 1 (4) *	Geography (3)	History (3)	Drama (2)
MFL 2 (4) *	DT (2)	Music (2)	Art (3)
Latin (4)	Programming (2)	L.F.L (1)	P.E. (3)
	Games (4)	Enrichment (2)	

In the Removes, the classes continue to be mixed ability except for Maths. As with the Third Form, classes 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.

\*Languages - pupils can choose to swap one of the languages they studied in the Thirds for beginners' Russian or continue to study the two languages chosen in the 3rds.

In addition, all pupils study Latin in the Removes.

Design Technology in the Removes contains both practical DT, and some elements of Electronics.

The Lion Diploma continues in the Removes and concludes with an awards ceremony at the end of the year.

### **Lower-Fourth Form** (year 9)

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

<b>Core</b>	English (6)	Maths (6)	Biology (4)	Chemistry (4)
	Physics (4)	Geography (4)	History (4)	RS (4)
	PE (2)	Games (4)	L.F.L (2)	Enrichment (1)
<b>Language Choices:</b>				
<b>Options</b>	MFL 3: One to be chosen:	Classical: (3) One to be chosen from:	Mixed Block: (3) One to chosen from:	Creative and Technical: (3+3) Two to be chosen from:
	French German Spanish	Classics Latin Gratin  <i>(Classics has no language component and is not a necessary precursor to GCSE Classical Civilisation)</i>	French German Russian* Spanish Classics Latin  <i>(* from 24-25, Russian will no longer be an option for this year group)</i>	Art Music DT Computer Programming Drama

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

### **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 compulsory 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 continue to have largely mixed-ability groups.

Core	English (9)	Maths (7)	Biology (4)	Chemistry (4)
	Physics (4)	PE (2)	Games (4)	L.F.L (2)
GCSE Options	4 x (6)	Art		Music
		Classical Civilisation	French	Physical Education
		Classical Greek	Geography	
		Computer Science	German	Religious Studies
		Design Technology	History	
		Drama	Latin	Russian
				Spanish

One option choice must be a Modern Foreign Language, unless a student chooses to do both Classical Greek and Latin. They may then choose three 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 average for Creative and Technical Subjects being 18.



### **Fifth Form** (year 11)

The two 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.

<b>Core</b>	English (8)	Maths (7)	Biology (4)	Chemistry (4)
	PE (2)	Games (4)	L.F.L (2)	Physics (4)
	Private Study (1)			
<b>GCSE Options</b>	4 x (6)	Art	French	Music
		Classical	Geography	Physical Education
		Civilisation	German	
		Classical	History	Religious Studies
		Greek	Latin	
		Computer Science		Russian Spanish
		Design		
		Technology		
		Drama		

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

## **Sixth Form**

<b>Core</b>	Lecture	Games		
	LFL	Life Skills/Enrichment		
<b>Options</b>		Art	Economics	Latin
		Biology	English Literature	Further Maths **
		Business Studies	French	Single Maths
		Chemistry	Geography	Physics
		Classical Civilisation	German	Politics
		Design Technology	History *	Religious Studies
		Drama		Spanish
		EPQ		
		Computer Science		

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

\*\* Further Maths (Maths & Further Maths A-levels) counts as two option choices. This is taught on 18 periods in L6 and 20 in U6.

### **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 may opt to start with 4 A-Levels or 3 A-Levels plus an EPQ. In the Lower Sixth, A level subjects are taught on 11 periods a fortnight. If a student chooses to do Further Maths (Maths & Further Maths), this counts as two subject choices, but is taught over slightly fewer periods than two separate subjects. Students who choose Further Maths may choose two other courses.

As an alternative to an EPQ or fourth full A level, pupils have the option to pursue an AS in a language (modern or classical). Pupils are taught alongside those choosing to do a full A level in the language, with exams taken at the end of the Lower Sixth year.

Sixth Formers also follow a full Life Skills programme. This includes modules on (amongst other things) financial literacy, wellbeing, research skills, as well as specialist Higher Education and careers advice. Pupils also have a fortnightly lecture series with visiting speakers coming into the school. Pupils considering medical-based degrees and careers, are timetabled into a fortnightly Medics Group where they find out more about these courses and careers as well as being given advice and support towards their applications.

The Learning for Life curriculum also continues with a focus on Sex and Relationships education.

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.

### **Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)**

Some students will opt to study an EPQ instead of a fourth subject. Students will learn how to conduct an extended piece of research, then develop it into a project of their choosing. The aim is for students to learn independent working, project management, critical thinking and analytical skills, while applying them to a topic of their interest.

The EPQ presents a unique opportunity for the student to choose a subject of study, then develop a project to suit those interests. There is a focus on research and presentation skills, which students will get to use whilst working. This is good preparation for university and professional work, when independent working and the ability to develop a plan and manage its completion will be essential.

### **Upper Sixth Form** (year 13)

The majority of students continue into the Upper Sixth year with three A Levels and the lesson allocation, per subject, increases to 12 sessions a fortnight. They will then also continue with the lecture programme and Learning for Life programmes begun in the Lower Sixth. Particular time and focus is given to preparation of university applications and interviews etc. The Games programme continues as well.

For the academic year 2023-2024 those pupils taking three A Levels also choose an additional studies option as a form of enrichment. These courses are offered in a wide variety of subjects such as DIY, Animation, Law, and programming.

## **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 an assignment on Microsoft Teams. 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 (3<sup>rd</sup> – L4<sup>th</sup>), 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 mark books, 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 Year: 2023-2024**

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 <sup>th</sup> (years 10 and 11)	9 hours per week
6th form (years 12 and 13)	4 hours per A-level 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 *	GC + T	PE	GC	-	R
Removes	GC*	PE + GC	GC	R	-	GC+T
Lower Fourth	GC*	GC	R	PE	-	GC+T
Upper Fourth	GC *	GC + PE	GC	R	-	GC + PE
Fifths	R	GC	PE + mock grades	GC	T	-
Lower Sixth	GC*	GC	PE	R	-	PE, GC
Upper Sixth	GC + PE	R	-	PE + mock grades	HSM comment	-

PE = Parents' Evening

R = Report

GC = Grade Card

T = Tutor comment

\*At this stage only, an Attitude to Learning and organisation is awarded.

### **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 demonstrate 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.

### **Attitudes to Learning Grades** (replacing previous Effort grades)

	Attitudes to Learning	Organisation
EXCELLENT	Positive academic risk-taking is apparent, resilience is demonstrated and challenges embraced. Scholarly attitudes are adopted, as is responsibility for learning. Feedback is considered and acted on. Participation in class is focussed, demonstrating a thoughtful and positive approach to lessons; good questions are asked, developed answers are offered, collaboration is successful.	
GOOD	Resilience is usually shown, as is good engagement with work, and mistakes are learned from. Responsibility is taken for learning, engagement and participation in class are positive. The high expectations of teachers are regularly met.	Arrival to lessons is punctual and the correct equipment is brought. Deadlines are consistently met, and care is taken over the presentation of work.
INCONSISTENT, IMPROVEMENT REQUIRED	There can be inconsistency and passivity in the approach to learning. At times work can be good, but at others it seems to fall short of what should be possible. Engagement in class needs to be more thoughtful, and greater reflection upon the feedback that is provided is required.	Not always on time to lessons, and are not always in possession of the correct equipment. Deadlines are not always met, and care is not always taken over the presentation of work.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN	There is little engagement with learning and this is a source of concern. Feedback is not acted upon, and there is insufficient application to work. In class there can be times when the learning of others is disrupted. Current performance is well below expectations.	Regularly late to lessons and might often arrive without the right equipment. Regularly failing to meet deadlines, and a real lack of care is shown over presentation of work.

### **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 where learning is cumulative.

**a) Sixth Form Achievement Grades**

<b>Grade description</b>	<b>Grade label</b>
A* grade standard at A-level	A*
A*/A grade borderline	A*/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 5<sup>th</sup> Form are awarded numeric grades. All subjects will give grades to the U4th on the 9-3 scale, including 8.5, 7.5 and 6.5.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Equivalent to</b>
9	high A*
8.5	high A*
8	A*
7.5	A*/ A
7	A
6.5	A / B
6	B
5	B / C
4	C
3	D/E
2	E/F
1	F/G

Grades 8.5, 7.5 and 6.5 have been introduced to give more discrimination in Bancroft's grading. Though the achievement scale covers the full range of grades, it is very rare for grades below 3 to be given.

### **Junior Years Scale**      For 3rd – L4th

<b>Grade</b>	<b>descriptor</b>	<b>expanded meaning</b>
6	Excellent	Work is outstanding in all respects
5	Very good	Demonstrates an impressive grasp of the subject and high degree of competence
4	Reasonably good	Reasonably sound knowledge in most respects but clear areas for improvement
3	Some competence	Demonstrates a relatively basic grasp of the subject, with a number of areas requiring improvement
2	Concerns	Consistently experiencing difficulties, not making effective progress
1	Very serious concerns	Very 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.

### **Use of CEM Data for Benchmarking and Value-Added Analysis**

Students in year 7 sit the MidYIS test during their induction day at the end of year 6 and the results are used to give some basis for expectations and in order to check progress made by the students during their time at the school. GCSE results are checked against the MidYIS scores and value-added analyses are made.

Student's MidYIS scores are only made available to Heads of Department, housemasters and SMT so as to avoid the dangers of complacency at the top-end for students or staff, or a risk of a self-fulfilling prophecy at the bottom-end. It should be noted in any case that at the individual level the MidYIS scores as predictors are not reliable enough to make up for these concerns.

For A-level, Bancroft's use the ALIS system which gives baseline predictions according to average GCSE score attained. As above, this data is shared with Heads of Department, SMT and housemasters/mistresses.



The school has developed and continues to review a 'Bancroft's Baseline' which is generated in year 7. Currently, this baseline exists across all year groups. The Bancroft's Baseline will only be known by teaching staff and it is a tool to help track a student's progress through the school. It will also be used to help assess different cohorts such as department, gender, year group, etc so that school provision and policy can be monitored and improved where necessary.

The Baseline will be based on MidYIS, entrance exam and other data known to the school about each student. The Baselines will be adjusted periodically as new information comes to light.