

Curriculum Policy inclusive of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Philosophy

The Curriculum is designed to be both broad and balanced, introducing pupils to a wide range of subject areas. This breadth allows us to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses and enables pupils to realise their potential across as many curriculum areas as possible. Both Highfield and Brookham Schools place strong emphasis on the integration of outdoor learning opportunities (Forest School and outdoor learning at Brookham and Environmental Education and outdoor adventurous activities at Highfield) in the development of their curriculum. The schemes of work are designed to prepare pupils fully for entrance to their chosen schools at either 7+, 11+ or 13+ via Common Entrance, Entrance Examination or Scholarship.

We provide excellent teaching that is both age and ability specific. Above all, we can focus on each individual and encourage and direct them towards reaching the highest academic standards. We encourage self-discipline, concentration and organisation which, linked to first class teaching, enables children to experience the joy and excitement of discovering facts and ideas for themselves. We provide an education that has both breadth and challenge.

Principles

Several steps can be taken to help all pupils achieve. Teachers:

- create a supportive classroom environment that encourages individual and collaborative success;
- articulate clear expectations of pupil performance and effort levels;
- put the child at the centre of the learning;
- model excellent work;
- encourage cooperation and peer assessment;
- foster motivation;
- respect the diverse talents of the pupils;
- constantly re-evaluate their lesson planning and improve upon existing plans.

A supportive classroom climate is critical to pupil's achievement because:

- it fosters achievement by making pupils more willing to stretch themselves in new directions;
- fear of failure or embarrassment is not an issue;
- it gives pupils permission to be bold, daring and creative;
- there is respect for the learning process;
- there is a high level of trust between and among pupils and teachers.

Music, Drama, Art, DT, Sport and other activities form an important part of each child's day and ensure that each child is being challenged aesthetically, as well as spiritually and intellectually. A thriving House system also provides many opportunities for individual children to discover and demonstrate their strengths in a wide variety of areas: our Houses at Brookham are Ash, Oak and Willow and at Highfield are Agincourt, Trafalgar and Waterloo.

The fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs are interwoven throughout our curriculum with regular audits being carried out by the Heads of PSHE to gauge our provision in this area.

Curriculum Planning

The curriculum will be planned according to an agreed format.

Long Term Planning ensures continuity and progression, setting out the broad curriculum content to be covered within each year. A précis of this planning is available on the school's website for parent's information.

At Brookham Medium Term Planning takes the form of a half-termly overview of the main curriculum areas to be covered and the skills being built as a result. Separate subject teachers provide their own medium term planning.

Short Term Planning takes the form of weekly planners, giving details of teaching intentions and learning outcomes, specifying pupils' tasks, classroom organisation, resources and assessment opportunities.

Form Structure

At Brookham, each pupil is allocated to a form with a dedicated Class Teacher and a Classroom Assistant. The children will be registered each day at 8.20am and 12.45pm. The Class Teacher is responsible for the day-to-day pastoral welfare of each of their pupils. Class teachers will also closely monitor their pupils' overall academic progress. A pupil's class teacher should be the first point of contact for parents who have concerns about their child's progress at school. Class teachers deliver the PSHE programme to the Form through Circle Time, R.E. and PSHE lessons and through House meetings.

At Highfield, each pupil is allocated to a Form and a Form Room. In this Form and Form Room their Form Tutor will register pupils each morning at 8.25am. The Form Tutor is responsible for the day-to-day pastoral welfare of each of their pupils. Form Tutors will also closely monitor their pupils' overall academic progress. A pupil's Form Tutor should be the first point of contact for parents who have concerns about their child's progress at school. Where possible, Heads of Year deliver the PSHE programme to their Year Group.

Early Years Foundation Stage

At Brookham, the Early Years Foundation Stage classes follow the learning and development requirements of the EYFS statutory framework comprising:

- the seven areas of learning and development and the educational programmes:
- the early learning goals; and
- the assessment requirements.

The seven different areas of learning are developed and delivered using the same Creative Curriculum model as designed with the rest of the school.

In Nursery and Reception, the class teacher takes responsibility for their pupil's personal and social needs and their development in the seven key areas of learning.

Years 1 to Year 4

Pupils in Years 1-4 are taught in mixed ability groups where the class teacher is committed to providing high quality provision for all children in the context of challenge for all, with consistently high expectations for all children regardless of ability. A ceiling is not placed on a child's learning therefore outcomes remain the same for all with scaffolding considered for some.

At Highfield and Brookham we have embraced the idea of a topic based approach as the way forward in educating our children. From Nursery to Year 3 Literacy is taught using the Talk 4 Writing approach enabling children to imitate the key language they need for a particular topic orally before they try reading and analysing it. All of our writing is taught with a clear audience and purpose in mind.

Although the Form Teacher in Years N-4 is responsible for the teaching of the creative curriculum subjects to their Form, teaching by specialist teachers in specialist subject rooms is introduced as early as possible to maximise the pupils' achievement and progress. In Years N-4, pupils enjoy specialist teaching in Art and Design, Music, Spanish and PE and Games. In Year 4 French is also taught by a specialist teacher. From Year 5 to Year 8 pupils will receive specialist teaching in all subjects.

Year 5

In Year 5, our aim is to continue to promote the ethos of child-centred learning which underpins the Creative Curriculum.

The core subjects, English, Maths, French, Spanish and Science, along with the more practical subjects, will be taught by a range of subject specialists. The reality of the Common Entrance syllabus is such that specialist teaching is required to build up the knowledge base essential to complete the CE course successfully. We believe that such a system will allow the children to gain the best of both worlds; the teaching and learning in the Creative Curriculum programme will still be child-centred and develop essential learning skills. However, pupils will also benefit from high-class specialist teaching where acquisition of knowledge is key, in the selected subjects. This specialist approach is potentially just as creative and child-centred because teachers have the expertise and freedom to be flexible and extend the learning in exciting and new ways.

Years 6 to 8

In Years 6 to 8, teachers follow the ISEB Common Entrance syllabus for all examined subjects. Pupils are taught by specialists in each subject and this not only helps to develop children's academic ability at their own pace but facilitates personalised learning and relationships that nurture confidence and motivation and grow self-esteem. Children see different teachers in different situations and mutually respectful relationships are quickly formed. The principles of good practice and building cross-curricular links are maintained in Years 6, 7 and 8.

Setting Arrangements from Year 5 to Year 8

The school understands that pupils may have specific strengths and weaknesses across the curriculum. To enable the potential of each pupil to be developed, for pupils to be taught at a level most appropriate to their ability and for pupils to be best prepared for their chosen senior school, they are placed in sets according to their ability in the core subjects of Maths and English from Year 5. From Year 7, children are also placed in sets according to their ability in their chosen Modern Foreign Language. Pupils may for example find themselves in Set 1 for English yet Set 3 for Mathematics, when this best suits their individual needs. The choice of the most appropriate set for each pupil in each core subject is regularly reviewed. Teaching groups for all other subjects are determined by the core subject teaching sets. These subjects are therefore not 'set' in relation to the child's ability in those subjects but all subjects contribute to the discussions about setting for Maths and English. The teaching in these subjects is appropriately differentiated to ensure all children work at the pace that is appropriate to them. Subjects that dictate the grouping of other subjects may change from year to year.

In Years 6, 7 and Year 8 we also allow for non-Latin sets within the English setting; the composition of these Sets are decided based upon various academic and pastoral reasons. In Year 6, the weekly Latin lesson is replaced by an extra English lesson. In Years 7 and 8, over a fortnight, children within the non-Latin set receive extra lessons for English (2), Science (1) and Maths (2).

Co-Curricular Provision and 'Highfield Keys' Programme

Building on the strength and breadth of an already strong and diverse After School Clubs and Directed Activities Programme, an enhanced Co-Curricular programme was launched in September 2019 under the direction of the Head of Co-Curricular. This sees the development and progressive introduction of a fully integrated extra-curricular programme, the 'Highfield Keys.' This is Highfield's version of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and is designed to give all pupils the opportunity to master a range of core skills designed to broaden their learning and develop their life skills, self-confidence, problem solving, team building skills and leadership abilities; while also involving them in environmental projects and a community outreach programme. The 'Highfield Keys' is followed on a Thursday afternoon by all pupils in Years 4 to 8.

Remote Learning Provision

In the event of school closures both Brookham and Highfield have tried and tested comprehensive online platforms in which to continue teaching a broad and balanced curriculum.

Nursery to Year 3 at Brookham use a platform called Seesaw to upload daily lessons in spelling/phonics, comprehension, literacy, maths, creative/science and stories. These are accompanied by PE, music and Spanish lessons once a week. These lessons are posted to the child's Learning Journal. Pupils can watch videos of the teacher introducing the lesson content and respond in real time by submitting a video of themselves working through a maths problem, snapping a picture of a paragraph they wrote or uploading a file or worksheet to demonstrate their learning.

Teachers respond to the work returned by voice comments, written comments or by marking the work and returning it via the Learning Journal to be improved. Some core lessons are also delivered live to Year 3 pupils.

At Highfield, in order to provide live and pre-recorded face-to-face lessons as part of our provision for our pupils, as well as allowing teachers to respond to questions your child may have whilst they are working on independent tasks, we utilise Microsoft Teams with all Year Groups. Instructions and resources for each pupil's lessons, are made available via Foldr (an online resource sharing platform); pupils are then required to upload their completed work to Foldr at the end of the lesson, so that it can be marked and fed back on. In the eventuality of the whole school being required to return to online teaching and learning, as a result of another period of school closure, we would move to a five day teaching timetable instead of our normal fortnightly one. All subjects are included in this timetable, with the exception of PSHE, which will be delivered via Form and Assembly time instead.

Ensuring that our curriculum can work in school and at home has required a considerable amount of adaptation and planning - it is working well so far. However, we will continue to refine and review our curriculum as the COVID-19 situations evolves.

HB/KW September 2018

HB/KW September 2019

PGSE/SEWB/HB/KW September 2020

AK/HB/KW June 2021