



## Curriculum Policy

### inclusive of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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This policy should be read alongside the following:

- 1) Recording, Reporting, and Assessment policy
- 2) Special Educational Needs and Development policy
- 3) The School Handbook
- 4) Gifted and Talented policy
- 5) Wellbeing & PSHE policy
- 6) EYFS policy

### What we aim to deliver

The Curriculum is designed to be both broad and balanced, introducing pupils to a wide range of subject areas and different learning experiences.

A knowledge and skills rich programme of learning is delivered to all pupils from Nursery to Year 8; Skills Builder the Essential Skills Framework; the EYFS framework, the National Curriculum standards and guidance; and the Independent Schools Examination Board Common Entrance Syllabus at 11+ and 13+ are the main sources of material used to inform what is taught throughout the academic year. In addition, some pupils are identified as early as the end of Year 6 as potential scholars (Academic, Drama, Sport, Art or All-Round) and they will receive advanced opportunities through focused teaching in lessons using resources and material usually reserved for higher order learning.

The breadth, depth and rigour of the curriculum will enable pupils to be ready for entering their chosen senior schools, and indeed adult life.

A range of fully endorsed and appropriate subject specific teaching schemes support the knowledge content required to be taught in each year group. Power Maths is an example of this, supporting the smooth transition of Maths skills from Reception to Year 8.

A fundamental aim of the curriculum is to enable pupils to make strong, age-appropriate connections across every subject, achieved through careful and meaningful collaborative planning. The 8 Essential Skills along with a thematic approach to learning will underpin all the teaching plans from Nursery through to Year 8, overseen by the Deputy Head (Professional Development) & Deputy Head (Academic). The knowledge taught will seamlessly interweave with the

Essential Skills, with a key focus on metacognition and the importance of reflection, review, and improvement, both for pupils and teachers.

### *The School Day:*

The school day for EYFS and the Pre-Prep will start at 8.15am and finish at 3.30pm (Nursery – Year 2) or 4.40pm (Year 3 – Year 8). The teaching day for Nursery to Year 2 will include a maximum of 6 x 45-minute lessons and finish at 3.30pm with their extra-curricular programme in place through to 4.30pm. The teaching day for pupils in Year 3 to 8 will include 8 x 45-minute lessons with the extra-curricular programme starting at 4.40pm and runs through to 5.30pm.

Daily prep / homework is in place each evening with scheduled subjects – largely core – for Year 3 to 8 pupils. Wednesday evening is dedicated to pupils catching up on prep missed or lesson work missed.

There is an expectation for all pupils to regularly read, practice spellings and multiplication tables, and undertake weekly verbal reasoning and non-verbal reasoning tasks.

Saturday will feature the Diploma programme which is outlined in detail below. Nursery to Year 3 do not attend Saturday school.

### *Skills Builder – Essential Skills:*

Introduced in September 2023, driven from an overwhelming desire to equip our pupils with skills for life not just the acquisition and demonstration of knowledge. The 8 Essential Skills permeate the entire teaching programme across Highfield and Brookham School. They are the highly transferable skills that make a real difference to learners and that are needed to succeed in almost every profession. These are: Listening, Speaking, Problem Solving, Creativity, Leadership, Teamwork, Staying Positive and Aiming High. As part of the Skills Builder Acceleration Programme, we have the resources and support to explicitly teach and assess these 8 skills which are each broken down into steps: a sequential series of capabilities that build from absolute beginner to mastery. A common language around the 8 skills ensures consistency and a clear understanding from nursery to year 8, they form the backbone of our school values and are embedded within our reward system and diploma.

### *Highfield Diploma:*

Introduced in September 2023 following a long period of consultation among all staff, the aim of this award scheme is to recognise and celebrate the achievement, attainment, and development of every pupil from Year 3 to 8 across all aspects of school life using the Eight Essential Skills as set by the educational organisation Skills Builder (Listening, Speaking, Problem Solving, Creativity, Aiming High, Staying Positive, Leadership, & Teamwork). There are three significant stages of achievement – Pathfinder for Years 3 & 4; Discoverer for Years 5 & 6; and Pioneer Award for Years 7 & 8, each with its own celebration at the end of the school year. Year 8 will have the opportunity to develop Ambassador and Leadership skills in the various senior pupil roles during their final year of school. The academic lessons, Keys programme, co-curricular programme and the Saturday diploma programme are all aspects of school life where the pupils can demonstrate their engagement and commitment to the Eight Essential Skills. The teachers will

help the children record the acquisition of the skills in their Passports (hard copy for Years 3, 4 & 5 / digital copies for Years 6, 7 & 8). The level of achievement and attainment will be measured using five methods:

1. Total number of times at least 50% of the skills are acquired across 50% of the subjects during the academic year.
2. Total number of times all the skills are acquired across 50% of the subjects during the academic year.
3. Total number of times all the skills are acquired across all the subjects during the academic year.
4. The level of independently aiming to acquire the skills across all subjects i.e. observing a pupil consciously seeking to achieve a skill without being guided or encouraged by a member of staff.
5. Frequency of a pupil aiming to acquire a skill that takes them significantly out of their comfort zone i.e. taking part in the school production when performing in front of an audience is clearly something that would usually be difficult.

A Pass, Merit or Distinction will be awarded to each child based on the criteria informing the judgement.

End of the school year assembly will be the point of celebration for Years 3, 5 & 7, with pupils receiving a badge to signify achieving the half-way point successfully and a record made in their Passport of the potential final grading based on their performance so far. This should act as a target i.e. on track for a Pass but you have the chance to turn it to a Merit or Distinction, or they are on track for a Distinction and need to maintain their approach in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year to keep it.

Speech Day will be the point of celebration for Years 4, 6 & 8, with pupils receiving a high-quality certificate and their Passport.

### ***Thematic Learning linked to the Sustainable Development Goals:***

Introduced in September 2023, following consultation and good practise guidance, pupils will learn through the process of integrating and linking multiple elements of a curriculum in an ongoing exploration around a broad theme. Research proves that pupils learn better when experiencing knowledge in a larger context. They begin to see relationships and connections across time, place, and disciplines. Learning about wider themes and related concepts more closely resembles how life is experienced outside of school and the classroom. The aim is to shift as much subject content as possible, if appropriate, to fit under one termly 'topic or project' umbrella. These termly topics are driven by an enquiry question and have been planned carefully to include opportunities to highlight one of the 17 sustainable development goals adopted by the UN member states in 2015. This is in line with recent government guidance on sustainability and climate action. By addressing real world challenges such as poverty, hunger, inequality, peace and justice with activities grounded in real world issues we aim to promote a sociocultural awareness and understanding.

## Co –Curricular Provision and ‘Highfield Keys’ Programme:

The co-curricular programme (post 4.40pm) and the Highfield Keys programme (timetable throughout the week during the normal curriculum provision) offer the opportunity for pupils to develop a whole range of skills through activities that challenge them e.g. Bushcraft, Model Making, Dance, Community Service, IT Coding, STEM projects and many more innovative ideas. These will now tie in more closely with Diploma, making it immediately identifiable and trackable for the pupils and staff, all leading to accurately recorded evidence of achievement and progress across all aspects of school life.

## How we aim to deliver

The primary objective of every teacher at Highfield and Brookham School is to deliver the curriculum in a classroom environment that is:

- 1) Supportive and caring.
- 2) Open to questions and evokes calm debate.
- 3) Able to identify individual learning habits and needs and respond accordingly.
- 4) Allows pupils to recognise the value and benefit of mistakes.
- 5) Modelling excellent behaviour.
- 6) Allows the pupils to quickly identify with the learning and skills objectives and always move forward positively towards accomplishing them.
- 7) Encouraging of collaboration as well as individual work.
- 8) Motivating to learn.
- 9) Reflective, reviewing and improving all the time – both pupil and teacher.
- 10) Respectful of the range of abilities and opinions shared by every pupil.
- 11) Open to pupils willing to challenge themselves and be challenged; constantly stretching to achieve their best.
- 12) Reflective of the progress made by individual pupils from the previous lesson (OTrack supported).

Following a period of consultation during the academic year 2022-23, and the collaboration of the senior teaching team – drawing on many years of collective experience in education – it was decided to apply the neurological science advice of having a single person teach more subjects – Core and Humanities - through to the end of Key Stage 2. The pastoral and academic impact of this approach through to the age of 11 has been proven to be critical, regardless of the educational setting. Making strong links in mixed ability classes through to Key Stage 2 allows children to accelerate their learning. Not having a ‘ceiling’ of expectation at this young age is crucial to the development of a young mind, and, in fact, can have the opposite effect to previous perceptions about how the brain responds in an ability setting structure i.e. accelerated learning opportunities in mixed ability classes can actually lead to early identification of higher order learning capabilities among a bigger range of children.

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 Wellbeing; PSHE; & Religion, Philosophy and Ethics lead teacher.

### **Annual Planning:**

**During the academic year 2023-24, the Deputy Head (Academic) and (Professional Development) will conduct an overview and an audit of the way in which all teachers across every department sets out their long-, medium- and short-term planning with a view to making it a more uniformed approach for future planning.**

*Long Term Plans for every department will be made available on the school website at the beginning of each academic year.*

Long Term Planning: A brief overview of how a given subject and its topics link together with other subjects and the Skills Builder skills; knowing the general shape of what is to be taught term by term. A collaborative process between all teachers, driven by key stage leads and subject leads.

Medium Term Planning: This begins with a Termly Topic Overview which has a brief description of objectives for all subjects taught under the topic heading. Schemes of work have more detail about the skills and topics to be taught, resources used, best teaching practices to be applied, and the early stages of identification of the individual pupil needs. A collaborative process between all teachers, driven by key stage leads and subject leads.

Short Term Planning: A very clear plan of the daily lessons, identifying the precise individual pupil needs and how they are going to be embedded in the teaching. The learning objective and desired outcomes / expected level of progress for every pupil is noted. A space for noting down brief reflections of the lesson, highlighting pupils who have made / or not made expected levels of progress as well as those pupils who have made significant levels of progress, allowing the next-steps and targets process to be straightforward for those pupils.

Otrack is the whole school progress tracking system. A software that allows a teacher to track an individual pupil's progress, either measured against their own ability or the cohort. A simple colour coded system with statements that are the learning objectives. The statements are largely based on the National Age-Related Expectation, can be bespoke or use other educational organisations quality measure standards i.e. the ISEB. Refer to the Reporting, Recording and Assessment policy for more details.

### **Pastoral care throughout the school day:**

#### ***Early Years Foundation Stage***

The Early Years Foundation Stage classes follow the learning and development requirements of the EYFS statutory framework comprising the seven areas of learning and the early learning goals. The seven different areas of learning are developed and delivered through continuous provision and use the same topic-based approach along 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. Specialist teachers teach MFL, PE, swimming and Games and Music.

### ***Years 1 & 2 (Lower Prep)***

Each pupil is allocated to a form with a dedicated Class Teacher and a Classroom Assistant. 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. Specialist teachers teach MFL, PE, swimming and Games, Music and Art.

### ***Years 3 – 6 (Middle Prep)***

Year 3 will be delivered their classroom teaching in the Brookham building despite their school day and curriculum provision aligned with Year 4 who are taught in the Highfield building.

Years 3 and 4 will follow a similar timetable, largely delivered by the Form teacher but with specialist teachers for Music, Art, D.T., Sport, Science and Modern Foreign Languages.

Years 5 and 6 will follow a similar timetable, 22 out of a possible 40 lessons delivered by the Form teacher for the core subjects (Science supported by subject specialists), humanities and PSHE. Specialist teachers will still provide for Music, Art, Sport, Modern Foreign Languages and D.T.

### ***Years 7 & 8 (Upper Prep)***

Years 7 & 8 are taught by subject specialist teachers following the model expected from Key Stage 3 and beyond. The National Curriculum and parts of the Common Entrance 13+ syllabus inform the long-, medium- and short-term teaching and learning plans delivered by each teacher. The Eight Essential Skills Builder skills will thread through the teaching plans too, explicitly paying attention to the value of learning skills as well as developing knowledge; achieved effectively through the application of concepts taught in each subject.

An increase in enquiry led learning through the ISEB IPQ will allow pupils to take a 'deep dive' into what they are learning, especially as the IPQ's fundamental aim is to link subjects so pupils can appreciate they are not learnt in isolation despite being taught separately.

Assessments at the end of Year 8 across English, Maths, Science, MFL, Latin, History and Geography will allow for pupils to have a summative score of their knowledge.

IPQ presentations and scholarships to senior schools will also feature in Years 7 & 8. The School and parents discuss whether they should register their child for a scholarship to a senior school. Once agreed, the School will support the preparations for any scholarship ahead of an assessment day.

### **Study Skills:**

Introduced as a standalone lesson each week for pupils in Year 3 to Year 8. A dedicated programme of study offers more detail about the aims and objectives of the Study Skills programme for all pupils. There are three fundamental areas of focus throughout the academic year for this programme:

- 1) For all pupils to have the opportunity to develop strong metacognition skills (intentional thinking how to think and learn)
- 2) For all pupils to hear from external speakers who can help them make strong links with what they are learning (age appropriate and closely aligned with the knowledge and Skills Builder skills being covered at any given time)
- 3) For all pupils to be given the opportunity to review, reflect, and improve on their work; taking responsibility for their own learning and progress.
- 4) For all pupils to be given the opportunity to improve their communication skills - both verbal and written – through the development of an online Pupil Portfolio / C.V. (using our Microsoft 365 platform).

#### Remote Learning Provision For All:

In the event of school closure Brookham and Highfield School have tried and tested comprehensive online platforms in which to continue teaching a broad and balanced curriculum. For Years 3 to 8 Microsoft Teams will provide the platform for live lessons. Another supporting platform is Foldr, and instructions and resources for each pupil's lessons can be made available here too. Pupils are then required to upload their completed work at the end of each lesson, which allows teachers to mark the pupils' work. In the event of school closure, it will be expected that teachers turn around their marking within a week. Remote learning will be the common provision of the curriculum for any pupil who requires a long-term period of absence from school. Highfield and Brookham School will consult medical and legal advice before any remote learning measures are put in place.

Nursery to Year 2 will use a platform called Seesaw to upload daily lessons. 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.

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