

# **CURRICULUM POLICY**

**Applies to whole school including EYFS**

Version	1	2	3	4	
Policy reviewed on	September 2021	June 2022	September 2023	September 2024	
Policy written by	Mrs Walker	Mrs Walker	Mr Sullivan	Mr Sullivan	
Policy seen by governors	Mrs Wilcox	Mrs Wilcox	Board Meeting – 20/09/23	Board Meeting – 09/10/24	
Date of next review	September 2023	September 2023	September 2024	September 2025	

**This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people/vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION - ACADEMIC PHILOSOPHY**

### **Ethos and Aims: Branwood Core Values**

Our aim at Branwood Preparatory School is to nurture the advancement of each child, to promote learning and personal growth and to help them to become their best selves.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that our curriculum supports the ethos of Branwood Preparatory School and fulfils our school aims. At Branwood, we aim to give our children the skills and the inspiration to learn to the very best of their ability and to develop a life-long passion for learning that will enable them to achieve their true potential.

At Branwood we see the curriculum as the total learning experience for our pupils, which includes not only the taught lessons but also the routines, behaviours, events, activities and other opportunities that our pupils experience on a daily, weekly and yearly basis in order to ensure that all of them make the best progress possible and attain high standards.

### **Ethos & Aims: Statement of Ethos**

At Branwood we place great emphasis on a broad and inclusive education, in a nurturing and supportive environment, whilst striving for excellence in all that we do.

In celebrating each child for the unique qualities they bring to our community, we encourage them to explore and develop their interests, gain confidence in themselves and in their abilities, and seize the rich opportunities life offers.

We seek to prepare all our children for a life of learning and fulfilment, and for the fast-changing world of the 21st century as responsible, active, and compassionate global citizens.

In all that they do, we encourage our children to 'Aspire, Achieve, Enjoy', and to be the best that they can be.

The school's motto, which helps us to achieve our aims, is SCORE:

**Scholarship** – to foster a love of learning, intellectual curiosity, independence of thought, and effective learning habits.

**Character** - to develop resilience and confidence, and to inculcate integrity and to foster a vibrant school community, built on trust and respect, and instil a sense of social responsibility.

**Opportunity** - to provide a rich and stimulating school experience, where our pupils can explore and develop their interests, gifts and talents, and discover new ones.

**Resilience** where all are valued as individuals; one which provides the opportunity for participation in a rich and diverse co-curricular programme and which is underpinned by a culture of respect for ourselves and others.

**Environment** - to provide a safe, stimulating and supportive school environment, where each pupil can feel inspired, challenged and valued.

At Branwood we dream our goal, see our goal, work together towards our goal and SCORE our goal.

## **2.0 INTRODUCTION - REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS**

Our school's curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning, and personal growth and development. It is designed to fully cover - and also exceed - the requirements of the EYFS Curriculum, Lower School and Upper School level. It also recognises the specific demands of the various examinations to Independent Senior/Grammar Schools and includes full preparation for the Trafford Local Authority 11+ entrance examinations.

At Branwood we seek the highest standards of attainment for all of our children. We also value the breadth of the curriculum that we provide. We aim to foster creativity in our children and to help them become independent learners. Above all, we believe in making learning fun and rewarding.

## **3.0 BRANWOOD CORE VALUES**

Our school curriculum is underpinned by the values that we hold dear at our Branwood School. The curriculum is the means by which the school achieves its objective of educating children in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need in order to lead fulfilling lives.

The main values of our school, upon which we have based our curriculum are:

- We are a fully inclusive, yet independent preparatory school.
- All stakeholders (Pupils, Parents, Staff, Governors and Trustees) will adhere to and support the ethos of an independent preparatory school.
- The school's prime focus is preparation for independent senior school and grammar school examinations.
- At Branwood, we aim to achieve academic excellence in English, Mathematics, Languages and Music but at the same time develop a broad and balanced curriculum including Science, IT, Art, PE, RE, PSHEE, RSE and other foundation subjects.
- That punctuality, appearance, behaviours and manners are the bedrock of the school.
- That the quality and presentation of both classwork and homework is a high priority for our school and we look for all stakeholders to support us in this.
- That taking part in our school and in everything that we do should be at the forefront of our minds.
- That the school is a safe and happy place for our pupils to achieve their true potential.
- At all times we will keep these core values at the heart of all that we do and hope to achieve.
- We value children's uniqueness, we listen to the views of individual children and we promote respect for diverse cultures.
- We value the spiritual and moral development of each person, as well as their intellectual and physical growth.
- We value the importance of each person in our community, and we organise our curriculum to promote inclusion, cooperation and understanding among all members of our community.
- We value the rights enjoyed by each person in our society. We respect each child in our school for who they are, and we treat them with fairness and honesty. We want to enable each person to be successful, and we provide equal opportunities for all our pupils.
- We will strive to meet the needs of all our children, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements regarding inclusion.

- We value our environment, and we want to teach our pupils, through our curriculum, how we should take care of the world, not only for ourselves, but also for future generations.
- British values, which are democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, are actively promoted in every aspect of school life.

#### **4.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CURRICULUM**

The aims and objectives of our school curriculum are:

- To enable all children to learn, and develop their skills, to the best of their ability.
- To promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school, and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning.
- To give children experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education.
- To enable children to acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills.
- To enable children to be creative and to develop their own thinking.
- To teach children about the developing world, including how their environment and society have changed over time.
- To help children understand Britain's cultural heritage and to promote its Fundamental Values.
- To appreciate and value the contribution made by all ethnic groups in our multi-cultural society.
- To enable children to be positive citizens by encouraging respect for other people, with particular regard to the protective characteristics under the Equality Act of 2010.
- To fulfil all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the School Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.
- To teach children to have an awareness of their own spiritual development, and to distinguish right from wrong.
- To help children understand the importance of truth and fairness, so that they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all.
- To enable children to have respect for themselves and high self-esteem, and to live and work co-operatively with others.
- To prepare for 11+ examinations to local independent or state grammar school.

The curriculum at Branwood is designed to enable all pupils to learn and make progress, including those pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and those for whom English is an additional language (EAL). For all these groups of children, the school takes reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to be appropriately supported to ensure they are able to make the best possible progress and develop in line with their peers.

#### **5.0 ORGANISATION AND PLANNING**

##### **5.1 Nomenclature**

Nursery = KG1

Reception = KG2

Year 1 = Form 1

Year 2 = Form 2

Year 3 = Form 3

Year 4 = Form 4

Year 5 = Form 5

Year 6 = Form 6

## **5.2 Administration**

Our School is divided into three administrative sections:

- EYFS: Kindergarten 1 (KG1) and Kindergarten 2 (KG2)
- Lower School: Form 1 (F1) and Form 2 (F2)
- Upper School: Form 3 (F3), Form 4 (F4), Form 5 (F5), Form 6 (F6)

### **5.2.1 EYFS/Lower School Administration**

The EYFS Leader is responsible for all matters relating to the EYFS and the Lower School Leader is responsible for all matters relating to Forms 1 and 2. Both Leaders also oversee all pastoral and academic matters relevant to pupils within these remits. Individual Form Tutors are responsible for the delivery of the core subjects and some humanities subjects in KG1, KG2, Form 1 and Form 2.

Support is also provided by the Headmistress, Deputy Head and Assistant Head Teacher, along with other members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The SLT comprises:

- The Headmistress
- The Deputy Head (Pastoral responsibility)/EYFS Lead
- The Assistant Head (Curriculum responsibility)/Upper School Lead
- The Lower School Lead
- The Bursar
- The Registrar & Marketing Manager

The curriculum includes opportunities for pupils to develop responsibility and experience elements about adult life in a manner that is appropriate for children in the Preparatory School. In Lower School, the class teacher - supported by teaching assistants - is responsible for the delivery of the majority of the curriculum subjects. Some subjects such as Music, Modern Foreign Languages, IT and PE are taught by specialist staff.

### **5.2.2 Upper School Administration**

The Assistant Head also serves as the Upper School Leader and is responsible for all matters relating to Forms 3 to 6. Individual Form Tutors are responsible for the delivery of the core subjects and some humanities subjects in Forms 3 and 4, for most part. Subject specialists also complement the teaching of pupils in Forms 3 and 4. Upon entry into Form 5, the children are taught by a specialist Maths teacher and a specialist English teacher. This arrangement continues into a second year as the children move into Form 6. It is made a priority to ensure that the class teachers in Forms 5 and 6 are experienced teachers, with a thorough knowledge of the entrance examination timetables, standards and expectations.

### **5.3 Curriculum Planning**

We plan our curriculum in two phases.

- We agree a scheme of work for each subject area and for each year group. This indicates what topics are to be taught in each year. We review these schemes of work on an annual basis. This is done in collaboration with SLT and Subject Leaders.
- Our schemes of work support us in building focused and concise medium-term plans. In all subjects, our medium term planning outlines the learning delivered across the entirety of a half term's worth of study. There are hence six medium term plans for each subject across Forms 1 to 6. Within these, teachers set out the learning objectives for each session and identify what resources and activities will be needed on a week by week basis. Our medium term planning also clearly outlines differentiation wherever appropriate.

Planning is kept on the staff shared drive and can be accessed from here.

We plan the curriculum carefully, so that there is a logical coherence and obvious progression in all subject areas.

Assessment informs planning and medium term planning is reviewed and updated annually as cohorts progress through the school, so that it is entirely appropriate to their learning requirements.

#### **5.3.1 EYFS Planning**

In KG1 and KG2 we use The Early Years Statutory Framework. This provides several areas of learning. We include the learning of a modern foreign language (namely Spanish) as well as IT, Music and PE; all taught by specialist teachers. The continuous provision is an important part of the weekly timetable as is more structured and formal learning. Literacy and Mathematics are given main priority in terms of teaching time to reflect their status as core subjects. Phonics is also taught in phases across Lower School.

Our planning provides broad and balanced learning experiences using the Development Matters document alongside the interests of the children which supports their journey to achieving the early learning goals.

#### **5.3.2 Lower and Upper School Planning**

In Lower and Upper School, we teach the foundation subjects separately. This means that, for example, at Lower School level, a child may concentrate in one half term on a History topic, then switch to a Geography topic in the next half term period. Thus, in due course, each child has the opportunity to experience the full range of our curriculum subjects. In Upper School, the Foundation subjects are taught as individual subjects. We strive to provide a balanced curriculum and give each Foundation subject equal teaching time; usually an hourly block per week. From the age of three, Spanish is taught as a curriculum subject and this occurs through to Form 6.

## **6.0 OUTLINE OF THE CURRICULUM**

### **6.1 The Foundation Stage - EYFS**

The curriculum that we teach in KG1 and KG2 meets the requirements set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework.

Our school fully supports the principal that young children learn through play, and by engaging in well-planned and structured activities. Teaching in KG2 builds on the experiences the children had during their time in KG1.

The four guiding principles in our Early Years department are:

- every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates.

We are well aware that all children need the support of both the parents and the teachers to make good progress in school. We strive to build positive links with the parents of each child, by keeping them informed about how the children are being taught, and how well each child is progressing.

The curriculum for EYFS at Branwood is divided into seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas, the prime areas, are:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

The specific areas are:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

### **Communication and Language**

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their



ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

### **Physical Development**

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

### **Literacy**

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

### **Mathematics**

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for

children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

### **Understanding the World**

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

### **Expressive Arts and Design**

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements.
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

### **Assessment**

In the Early Years on-going (formative) assessment is an integral part of the learning process. Assessment takes place through observation and discussion.

Feedback is provided at Parents Evenings and through a written report in December and July.

In the final term of the year, in which the child reaches age five, the EYFS Profile will be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Form One. The Profile will reflect ongoing observation; all relevant records held by the setting; discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. Practitioners will indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). This is the EYFS Profile.

The early learning goals prime areas are:

### Communication and Language

ELG: Listening, Attention and Understanding

Children at the expected level of development will:

Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions;

Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding;

Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

ELG: Speaking

Children at the expected level of development will:

Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary;

Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate;

Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Teacher should be understood to refer to any practitioner working with the child.

### Personal, Social and Emotional Development

ELG: Self-Regulation

Children at the expected level of development will:

Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate;

Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

ELG: Managing Self

Children at the expected level of development will:

Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge;

Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly;

Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

ELG: Building Relationships

Children at the expected level of development will:

Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others;

Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers;

Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

### Physical Development

ELG: Gross Motor Skills

Children at the expected level of development will:

Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others;  
Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing;  
Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

#### ELG: Fine Motor Skills

Children at the expected level of development will:

Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases;  
Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery;  
Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

### Literacy

#### ELG: Comprehension

Children at the expected level of development will:

Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary;  
Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories;  
Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

#### ELG: Word Reading

Children at the expected level of development will:

Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs;  
Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending;  
Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

#### ELG: Writing

Children at the expected level of development will:

Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed;  
Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters;  
Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

### Mathematics

#### ELG: Number

Children at the expected level of development will:

Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number;  
Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5;  
Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

#### ELG: Numerical Patterns

Children at the expected level of development will:

Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system;  
Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity;  
Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

### Understanding the World

#### ELG: Past and Present

Children at the expected level of development will:

Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society;

Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;

Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

#### ELG: People, Culture and Communities Children at the expected level of development will:

Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps;

Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;

Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps.

#### ELG: The Natural World

Children at the expected level of development will:

Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants;

Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;

Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

#### Expressive Arts and Design

##### ELG: Creating with Materials

Children at the expected level of development will:

Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function;

Share their creations, explaining the process they have used;

Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

##### ELG: Being Imaginative and Expressive

Children at the expected level of development will:

Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher;

Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs;

Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music.

Reference: Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five. March 2021

## **6.2 Lower and Upper School**

Lower and Upper School pupils have a broad and balanced curriculum with plentiful opportunities for active and personalised learning, both independently and collaboratively.

### **6.2.1 Lower and Upper School Subjects**

Pupils learn the following subjects:

## **English**

Our English lessons develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary. Literacy is taught both directly, discretely and in a cross-curricular way, linking up with other areas of the curriculum. We teach our pupils to speak clearly, to convey their ideas fluently and confidently and to ask questions. Their vocabulary is developed systematically. Our pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure and to read widely. Verbal reasoning is also taught from Form 1 onwards as children build towards 11+ entrance examinations.

## **Mathematics**

In Mathematics our teachers ensure that mathematical skills are taught every day. They also use every relevant subject to develop pupils' mathematical fluency. Our pupils understand the importance of mathematics, are encouraged to be confident in numeracy and to apply the skills that they learn to problem solving. Non-verbal reasoning is also taught from Form 1 onwards as children build towards 11+ entrance examinations.

## **Science**

Science is taught as a separate lesson but in the EYFS, Form 1 and Form 2 it may be linked to our topic work where appropriate. We will encourage our pupils to be curious about natural phenomenon and to be excited by the process of understanding the world around them.

## **Modern Foreign Language**

Spanish is introduced in KG1. All pupils study Spanish until the end of Form 6. Our approach at Branwood is to make learning a new language fun! Young pupils are very receptive to learning a new language; they like to mimic pronunciation and they can easily pick up and duplicate new sounds. They feel a real sense of accomplishment when they learn to say something new. As part of our Diversity policy we also celebrate International European Language Day, in which the whole school get to participate. Also at the end of the year the children get to watch a Spanish Film with subtitles to further enhance their language skills.

## **Human and Social (Foundation) - History, Geography, Religious Education**

We often use topics to deliver humanities subject skills and understanding. Our topic programme is carefully balanced and planned to be age appropriate across the years. Topic maps are produced to show how each is taught, the knowledge and skills covered and links to other parts of the curriculum. It is important to us that where appropriate art, music, literacy and numeracy and science are linked in topic teaching. Our topics have a history and geography base so that we teach location and place knowledge, weather and climate skills and knowledge and about significant historical events, people and places in our own locality.

RE lessons offer learning opportunities that relate to spirituality, ethics, religion and philosophy and cover a balanced range of world religions and belief systems. Our teaching promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils. It also reflects the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

## **PSHEE, SMSC and RSE**

These subjects underpin all of our curriculum learning and provide opportunities for pupils to engage in broader skills relating to morality, health and teamwork. They reflect the school's aims and ethos. In our programmes we actively promote British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs to prepare our pupils for life in modern day Britain. We also encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Our SMSC lessons enable our pupils to understand the British democratic process and how to effect peaceful changes in society. All our year groups have timetabled PSHEE time but we encourage a cross-curricular approach to the development of PSHEE skills and understanding. RSE is also taught in all classes. This teaches the fundamental building blocks of positive relationships, focusing on friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other peers and adults. Children learn about relationships, the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, human sexuality and sexual health in an age-appropriate way.

### **Aesthetic and Creative Education - Art, D&T, Music, Dance, Drama**

We emphasise the transformational power and impact of creative subjects and the arts as a vehicle for creativity and individual expression and it provides opportunities for collaborative work. It is an important form of cultural expression and, therefore, has significance and meaning for all our children.

Branwood also provides opportunities for individual music tuition including, piano, keyboard, guitar, recorder, violin and trumpet.

Showcasing the children's musical and drama abilities takes the form of -

- Children in EYFS and Lower School actively take part in the Nativity at Christmas.
- Pupils in Upper School participate in the Summer Show.
- Dance
- The school choir and musical events

We believe that music enriches the lives of people, and so we wish to involve as many children as possible in musical activities. We have a junior and a senior school choir which we encourage all children to join. The choirs meet on a weekly basis and, although its primary aim is to enable children to enjoy singing together, it also performs in public on a number of occasions throughout the year.

We also provide opportunities throughout the year for budding musicians to perform for the school community. This includes solo and ensemble performances as part of assemblies and concerts. This recognises their achievements and celebrates their success.

### **IT**

We do have a discreet timetable time for the development of IT skills, but our approach is to also integrate IT into other curriculum lessons: the use of laptops and iPads is as much part of our learning tools as pencils and pens. Subject-specific software; from one-off programmes to learning platforms, support the school's teaching and learning across all years.

### **Physical – PE, including Extra- Curricular Activities such as:**

- Cross county

- Athletics
- Rounders
- Swimming
- Gymnastics
- Dance
- Football
- Lacrosse
- Cricket
- Fencing
- Netball

Some form of physical activity takes place every day. PE sessions focus on mastering basic movements including running, jumping, throwing and catching, as well as developing balance, agility and co-ordination. Pupils are encouraged to participate in team games and to develop simple tactics for being an effective team member. Indoor PE is held in our large hall and includes swimming, dance, apparatus work and gymnastics.

### **6.2.2 Exam Preparations**

Here at Branwood, our staff provide a range of support and guidance for parents and children in choosing the right Senior School for their needs. We prepare children for moving on to a wide variety of secondary schools.

As an Independent School, we are very mindful of - but not restricted by - the National Curriculum. Our curriculum is personally-structured and, in the later years, there is a clear focus placed on the requirements of the Independent and Trafford LA Grammar Schools' 11+ entrance requirements and preparation. The curriculum remains broad and balanced with a continued emphasis on creativity, questioning, and independent thinking.

Our Form 5 and 6 children benefit from an extensive curriculum which helps prepare them for secondary school entrance exams and which gives them additional individual attention, whilst still encouraging independence. We work closely with parents to ensure a smooth as possible transition to their chosen Senior School.

Prior to the 11+ exams, we offer advice and support to both children and parents, in a number of ways.

Special arrangements are made for Form 6 during the Winter Term, as the work they cover at this time is predominately exam preparation. Following the exams from February to July, the children catch up on the Foundation subjects such as History, Geography, RE and Art.

### **6.2.3 Timeline for Senior School Application and Entry**

#### **Form 5**

September to July



- Lessons in Maths, English & Reasoning continued from the previous years, starting in Form 1.
- Increased focus on Verbal Reasoning and Non-Verbal Reasoning.

#### March to May

- GL, Bond and CEM Assessments take place – scores used for the child's reference to their Senior School.
- Parent consultations take place, including discussion re; Senior Schools and information about the cut-off point for the Trafford Exams in June.

### **Form 6**

#### September – February

- Improvised and prepared teaching practise.

#### September

- Trafford mock exam held at the very start of Winter Term.
- Trafford entrance exams proper held within the first two weeks of the Winter Term.
- Lessons in Maths, English, Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning.
- Post-School Maths and English Club offered for all children.
- Continuous Preparation for Independent entrance exams.

#### October

- Closing date for State Secondary School preference forms.

#### November

- Deadline for Independent Senior School Applications – dates vary – see individual schools for details

#### January

- Mock Interviews and interview practise
- Independent School Examinations take place

#### February

- Independent Grammar School Pupil Interviews take place

#### March

- Offer of places - State Schools on 1<sup>st</sup>, Independent Schools normally towards the start of the month

#### March – July

- Preparation for the transition to Senior School
- Including Life Skills lessons, visits to Senior Schools, PSHEE and RSE lessons covering the transition

### **7.0 ENHANCING AND ENRICHING THE CURRICULUM**

We are committed to the broadest educational offering, and that means looking beyond the National Curriculum. A very successful enrichment programme that draws upon a wide range of

adult skills is offered through school trips, visiting specialists and themed days and weeks as well as supporting various charities enhancing economic awareness:

We plan a series of trips each term for each year group. The trips are directly linked to our topic work.

- Other than Form 6, each year group has the opportunity to participate in Forest School outdoor learning every fortnight over the course of the academic year. This opportunity is extended to Form 6 once their January examinations have all concluded.
- Each year group will take part in a variety of workshops throughout the academic year. These will link to their topic work or to a whole school theme.
- We invite specialists from a range of institutions – The Police and the Fire Brigade. We also have links with small independent educationalists like The Forensic Scientist. Additionally, we are continuing to forge stronger links with secondary schools, such as Bolton School who have hosted us at their own in-house STEM activity and Maths Masterclass days.
- We undertake an audit of parental skills each year and this enables us to form connections with new organisations or to facilitate a workshop/talk led by a parent. Doctors, Dentists etc.
- We have themed weeks throughout the year. Healthy Living week falls in January to help boost exercise and good nutrition at a time when the winter might take its toll on both. Also Bike Ability, The CORAM Life Caravan and themed days are also incorporated into our curriculum. These may be designed to fit with national initiatives e.g. World Book Day, to match with events in the UK e.g. a national election and also to highlight our curriculum subjects e.g. Art Day, Poetry Day, European Language Day etc.
- We also celebrate the different religious festivals as part of our diverse culture including Christmas, Easter, Eid, Diwali. As Branwood consists of children from various backgrounds and cultures we feel it is important to celebrate these festivals.
- The children are also offered a variety of extra- curricular music lessons including:
  - Piano
  - Violin
  - Cello
  - Guitar
  - Trumpet
  - Recorder
  - P-Buzz
- The children are also invited to join the school's string and recorder group and also participate in the infant and junior choirs.
- The school's House system also gives the children the opportunity to participate in inter-school sports activities.

## **8.0 TRIPS AND OUTINGS**

We consider that children must be given the opportunity to learn by direct experience outside the classroom. Visits which further a child's understanding are planned regularly. These are always related to the curriculum.

See School Trips Policy for further information.

## **9.0 THE CURRICULUM AND INCLUSION**

The curriculum in our school is designed to be accessed by all children who attend the school. If we think it necessary to modify some children's access to the curriculum, in order to meet their needs, then we do this only after their parents have been consulted.

If children have Special Educational Needs or a Disability (SEND), our school does all it can to meet their individual needs. If a child displays signs of having special needs, then their Form Teacher makes an assessment of this need. In most instances the Teacher is able to provide the resources and educational opportunities that meet the child's needs, within normal class organisation. If a child's need is more severe, he/she will receive additional help via TA or support teacher. We always provide additional resources and support for children with special needs.

The school provides an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) for each of the children who are identified as being 'SEND Support' and above on the special needs register. This sets out the nature of the special need or concern and outlines how the school will aim to address it. The IEP also sets out targets for improvement, so that we can review and monitor the progress of each child at regular intervals.

We are committed to meeting the needs of children in our school who have disabilities, as we are to meeting the needs of all groups of children within our school. The school complies fully with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that these children are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-SEND children. Teaching and learning are appropriately modified for children with disabilities. For example, they may be given additional time to complete certain activities, or the teaching materials may be adapted. Our school SEND Policy outlines our approach in more specific detail.

## **10.0 EXPLANATION OF HOMEWORK**

In order that our pupils can attain the highest standard (spiritual, moral, social, cultural and academic), we recognise the crucial importance of an active educational partnership between home and school. Homework is just one of the ways in which we seek to foster this partnership. Homework encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers and parents to support children's learning.

Home learning is an essential part of a successful education and helps support pupils' ability to learn in a variety of contexts. Home learning not only consolidates classroom learning, it also helps pupils to develop the skills and attitudes they need for successful lifelong learning. It promotes independent learning skills, including the habits of inquiry and investigation.

In Upper School, pupils are expected to take on an increased level of a personal responsibility for their own time management and organisation of their homework, so that whilst keeping up with the home learning demands, they can pursue other beneficial hobbies and activities.

### **10.1 Breakdown of Homework Times**

At KG2 and above, the setting of English and Maths homework is alternated each night between Monday and Thursday. On Friday, children receive both English and Maths homework tasks for completion over the weekend. This allows children to complete 3 pieces of English and 3 pieces of Maths homework each week.

**KG1:** 10 mins daily on words and reading, 10 mins homework over the weekend

**KG2:** English/Maths 15 mins weekdays, 15 mins weekends

**Form 1:** English/Maths 20 mins weekdays, English and Maths (30 mins of each) weekends

**Form 2:** English / Maths 30 mins weekdays, English and Maths (30-45 mins of each) weekends

**Form 3:** English/Maths 30-45 mins weekdays, English and Maths (45 mins of each) weekends

**Form 4:** English/Maths 30-45 mins weekdays, English and Maths (45 mins of each) weekends

**Form 5:** English/Maths 45 mins weekdays, English and Maths (60 mins of each) weekends

**Form 6:** English/Maths 45 mins weekdays, English and Maths (60 mins of each) weekends

Note: No homework is set for Form 6 on Mondays during the Winter Term due to additional after-school English/Maths booster sessions

## **11.0 TRACKING PUPIL PROGRESS**

Across all subjects other than PE (which are assessed externally by our specialist providers), children's attainment and progress is formally tracked in terms of objectives that they have achieved. Additionally, scores yielded from weekly tests are also recorded. Tracking is conducted and stored electronically - via year-group-specific spreadsheets - to support teachers, Subject Leaders and also the SLT's monitoring of children's academic achievements and progress.

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.

Monitoring of pupils' work is primarily the responsibility of Form Teachers, under direction of the Assistant Head Teacher, who should be looking for inconsistencies in written and oral ability as well as those pupils who are 'under achieving' 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.

### **11.1 Tracking of Individual Subjects**

#### **Maths Tracking**

Children are assessed weekly, through ongoing and regular assessments within Maths and Non-Verbal Reasoning. The tracking of individual pupils' progress is monitored throughout the year by the Maths Leader.

Forms 1 to 6 also sit exams twice per year in November and May respectively. These exams allow our children to demonstrate their learning over time and take the form of traditional paper-based examinations for Forms 1 and 2, with computer-based examinations additionally sat by the children

in Forms 3 to 6. Our exam programme comprises of bespoke, in-house mathematical examinations as well as externally produced exams via GL Assessment.

Our whole-school Maths tracking reflects the built-in progression of our Maths scheme of work, with the standard required for success in the Consortium Independent Grammar School/Trafford Grammar School exams acting as our end goal.

#### English Tracking

Children are assessed weekly, through ongoing and regular assessments within English and Verbal Reasoning. The tracking of individual pupils' progress is monitored throughout the year by the Maths Leader.

Forms 1 to 6 also sit exams twice per year in November and May respectively. These exams allow our children to demonstrate their learning over time and take the form of traditional paper-based examinations for Forms 1 and 2, with computer-based examinations additionally sat by the children in Forms 3 to 6. Our exam programme comprises of bespoke, in-house English examinations as well as externally produced exams via GL Assessment.

Our whole-school English tracking reflects the built-in progression of our English scheme of work, with the standard required for success in the Consortium Independent Grammar School/Trafford Grammar School exams acting as our end goal.

#### Science Tracking

The tracking of individual pupils' progress is monitored at the end of each half term through the teacher assessment of the objectives within each unit of study. It is also formally assessed in Upper School within our exam weeks during November and May of the academic year.

#### Humanities Tracking

The tracking of individual pupils' progress is monitored at the end of each half term through the teacher assessment of the objectives within each unit of study.

#### IT Tracking

The tracking of individual pupils' progress is monitored at the end of each half term through the teacher assessment of the objectives within each unit of study.

#### PE Tracking

The tracking of individual pupils' progress is formally monitored at the end of the Winter and Summer terms through the teacher assessment of the objectives.

#### RE Tracking

The tracking of individual pupils' progress is monitored at the end of each half term through the teacher assessment of the objectives within each unit of study.

#### MFL Tracking

The tracking of individual pupils' progress is monitored at the end of each half term through the teacher assessment of the objectives within each unit of study. It is also formally assessed in Upper School within our exam weeks during November and May of the academic year.

#### Music

The tracking of individual pupils' progress is monitored at the end of each half term through the teacher assessment of the objectives within each unit of study.

#### PSHEE / SMSC

The tracking of individual pupils' progress is monitored at the end of each half term through the teacher assessment of the objectives within each unit of study.

### **12.0 EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

At Branwood Preparatory School we work hard to create a balanced curriculum which has breadth as well as depth. The school has a strong tradition of sporting participation, a range of music and performing arts activities and a variety of extra-curricular clubs. Members of the teaching team run extra-curricular school clubs along with external service providers.

A wide range of age appropriate clubs are offered both during lunch time and after school for all pupils.

Typically these could include IT, art and craft, a variety of sports including, gymnastics, rounders and netball, cross country, dance and choir.

The school has a strings group, recorder group, p-Buzz group and an orchestra.

Clubs and activities should promote a positive attitude towards school and help to develop the school's relationship with parents. They may also help children to channel their leisure time constructively.

At Branwood Preparatory School we aim to give children opportunities to:

- Participate in a variety of clubs.
- Safely enjoy well organised clubs.
- Be involved in competitive activities which take place in a friendly and sporting atmosphere.
- Make an active contribution to the school through their participation.
- Develop and extend their skills.

We provide an 'extended day' for working parents and carers from 8.00am until 6pm, and aim to keep the costs for this provision neutral. Morning Club allows parents to drop children off early. After school, children are cared for in our 'Beehive'; an environment that allows them to socialise, engage in playing with appropriate games and toys, as well as read, relax and even complete their homework. They are also given a light snack and drink.

### **13.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND SAFEGUARDING**

The curriculum at Branwood Preparatory School is designed to ensure equal opportunities for all learners, regardless of ability, gender, ethnicity, religion or disability. Although we are a selective school, we also operate a Learning Support Policy and a policy for gifted and talented pupils to ensure the needs of all learners are met.

Within our curriculum, we build in opportunities for our pupils to understand safeguarding issues which may affect them and to ensure they feel safe and supported at school. Our PSHEE curriculum affords opportunities to be responsive to arising issues, and E-safety awareness is taught throughout

the curriculum and particularly within the IT curriculum. RSE is provided as appropriate for the pupils' ages and stages of development.

Further details can be found in:

- The Equal Opportunities Policy
- The RSE Policy

#### **14.0 PUPIL PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT**

Pupil progress meetings - held termly - help to determine if pupils are reaching the required milestones in relation to their own ability and national and school indicators. Where pupils are not making adequate progress, they will be identified for close monitoring/small group intervention or 1:1 intervention as appropriate. If it is determined that the children are still not making adequate progress, they may be referred to the school's SENDCo for further investigation into their needs. The school provides Individual Education Plan (IEP) where necessary suitable for Upper and Lower School pupils and Play Plans for EYFS pupils. Where specific needs are identified and can be met with 'reasonable adjustment' by the school, there will be no additional costs for support. Where it is deemed most appropriate for there to be intervention from an outside resource, the cost for these services will be the responsibility of the parent.

In EYFS the school will assess according to the statutory Early Years Profile. Results of the Early Years Profile is provided to parents and Salford Local Authority on request.

#### **15.0 ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)**

We maintain an EAL register which is the responsibility of SENDCo. This is updated annually. Across the school, there may be a percentage of children for whom English is classed as an additional language, as defined by the DfE, though the majority would be considered to be fluent in English. Our annual cohort composition, determines what extra facilities and activities we will incorporate into our classrooms and environments.

We aim to provide opportunities for children to share their home language in learning as appropriate and ensure they have opportunity to share their heritage. We work to ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English from EYFS through to Form 6. Where a pupil has English as an additional language, and in the rare event that they need specialist teaching to develop appropriate fluency, parents will be guided and supported in finding such support outside school, as well as being advised of the support the school can provide. Where needed we will also provide an interpreter to facilitate parent meetings and any opportunity that affords communication regarding a child's progress.

#### **16.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### **16.1 Governors**

The Curriculum Governor will aim to meet with the Curriculum Lead to:

- Ensure the effective and rigorous implementation and monitoring of the policy.

- Monitor the success of the curriculum at committee level and at whole Governing Body meetings through the termly headmistress' report.

## **16.2 Headmistress and Senior Management Team**

- To provide appropriate support, training and resources for the subject areas and individual staff.
- To monitor and evaluate the delivery and impact of the policy
- To modify and update the policy in the light of ongoing developments and the changing needs of the school and its priorities

## **16.3 Subject Leaders**

Subject Leaders should:

- Be responsible for the co-ordination of schemes of work (i.e. long-term planning) and medium term planning, taking into consideration the aims and objectives of the policy.
- Provide appropriate support to team members by providing training materials or advice and guidance.
- Support staff to take risks in new teaching methods.
- Be responsible for writing and reviewing subject policies.
- Audit resources, manage the curriculum budget, purchasing resources.
- Monitor standards, teaching and learning in their subject across the whole school.
- Support and offer advice to colleagues on issues related to their subject.
- Create a subject action plan and grow their subject through this.

It is the role of each subject co-ordinator to keep up to date with developments in their subject, at both national and local level. They review the way the subject is taught in the school, and plan for improvement. This development planning links to whole-school objectives. Each subject coordinator reviews the curriculum plans for the subject, ensures that there is full coverage of their subject scheme of work, and sees that progression is hence planned into this scheme of work. There is some specialist subject teaching in English, Mathematics and Music and all in Spanish /Physical Education/ and Special Needs.

- Maths Leader – Mr C Sullivan
- English Leader – Mrs D Houseman
- Science Leader – Mrs C Christensen
- Humanities Leader (History, Geography, RE) – Miss L Basger
- MFL Leader – Sra C Pinon
- Music Leader – Mrs K Cracknell
- IT Leader – Mrs E Howard
- Art and DT Leader – Mrs D Houseman
- PSHEE / SMSC/ RSE Leader – Mrs L Boulton
- EYFS Leader – Mrs L Boulton



#### **16.4 Teaching Staff**

- To ensure that their own teaching meets the national Teachers Standards; strive for teaching and learning to be outstanding and is at least good if not outstanding.
- To implement this policy by planning and delivering high quality learning experiences.
- To have a growth mind set, be willing to take risks.
- Actively seek to reflect on their practice as appropriate.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues to share best practice and improve teaching.

#### **16.5 All Staff**

- To be aware of the principles of the policy and how they can contribute to it.

#### **16.6 Pupils**

- To work positively within lessons to enable staff to implement the policy effectively
- To engage with learning experiences outside the classroom by ensuring completion of the learning tasks set as homework

### **17.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The Headmistress and SLT are responsible for monitoring the way the school curriculum is implemented. Each subject is reviewed bi-annually.

The Headmistress and SLT are responsible for the day-to-day organisation of the curriculum. The Assistant Head and Lower School Lead monitor the lesson planning from all teachers half-termly, ensuring that all lessons have appropriate learning objectives.

Subject Leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school. They examine medium planning and our electronic curriculum tracking system to ensure that appropriate teaching objectives are delivered and that children are achieving. Subject Leaders also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

This policy is monitored and reviewed by the Assistant Head Teacher annually.