



## Belmont Preparatory School Curriculum Policy

### 1 Introduction

At Belmont Preparatory School we believe in the concept of lifelong learning, and in the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone, and that it should meet the needs of all children; in short, we believe that learning should be fun. Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives. In all our teaching we seek to uphold the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs so that our pupils are effectively prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

### 2 Aims

#### 2.1 We aim to:

- provide full time supervised education which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic, and creative education;
- provide subject matter appropriate for boys and girls aged 2-13 according to their age, aptitude and needs, including those who may carry an EHC plan.
- provide opportunities for pupils to acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;
- provide personal, social, economic and health education in line with Belmont's aims and ethos, and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act(a);
- provide careers' guidance for pupils especially those in Years 7 and 8 that is impartial and encourages all pupils to fulfil their potential, enabling them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options;
- provide education for all children appropriate to their needs, and for younger children in EYFS who are below compulsory school age, a programme appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills;
- provide opportunities for all pupils to learn, make progress and be prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life in due course.

We believe that people learn best in different ways. At our school we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows all children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

#### 2.2 Through our teaching we also aim to:

- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;

- foster children's self-esteem, and help them to build positive relationships with other people;
- develop children's self-respect, encourage them to understand the ideas, attitudes and values of others, and teach them to respect other people's feelings;
- show respect for a diverse range of cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- enable children to understand their community, and help them feel valued as part of it;
- help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.
- promote a range of thinking strategies and skills to enable and empower our pupils to approach tasks in a more sophisticated and independent manner.

### **3 Effective learning**

3.1 Research tells us a lot about how to maximise learning. We know that people learn in many different ways, and respond best to different types of input (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic); we must therefore deliver teaching in different ways to address the needs of all our learners. We take into account the different forms of intelligence (for example, mathematical/logical, visual/spatial and interpersonal when planning our teaching.

3.2 We ensure the best possible environment for learning by developing a positive atmosphere where pupils feel safe and feel they belong, where they enjoy being challenged, and enjoy learning, and know that they will succeed (because they know the challenge will have been set at the right level).

3.3 Concerning the structure of a lesson, learning-theory tells us:

- to connect the learning with previous work;
- to give learners the 'big picture' of the whole lesson;
- to explain the learning objectives, and why the lesson is important;
- to present the information in a range of styles;
- to allow opportunities for the pupils to build up their own understanding through various activities;
- to review what has been learnt, and so increase recollection;
- to provide feedback, celebrating success and reviewing learning strategies;
- to outline the next step in the learning before moving on.

3.4 We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:

- investigation and problem-solving;
- research and discovery;
- group work;
- pair work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- use of ICT;
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- creative activities;
- using a range of different media;
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations;
- designing and making things;
- participation in athletic or physical activity.

- 3.5 We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn - what helps them learn, and what makes it difficult for them to learn. Without becoming too technical, we are seeking to develop metacognition in our pupils.

#### **4 Effective teaching**

- 4.1 When we are teaching we focus on motivating all the children, and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement. We use the school curriculum plan to guide our teaching. This sets out the aims, objectives and values of the school, and details what is to be taught to each year group.
- 4.2 Teachers make ongoing assessments of each child's progress, and they use this information when planning their lessons. It enables them to take into account the abilities of all their children. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of all our children. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning work for children with special educational needs, we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities. We value each child as a unique individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability. We will strive to meet the needs of all our children, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion.
- 4.3 We set academic targets for the children in each year, and we share these targets with children and their parents. We review the progress of each child as an ongoing process, and set revised targets.
- 4.4 We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives. Our lesson plans contain information about the tasks to be set, the resources needed, and the way we assess the children's work. Long-term planning sets out the syllabus in each subject and to each Year group as a series of bullet point headings. Medium-term plans break down the syllabus into weekly or lesson by lesson areas of study. Long and Medium term plans are the responsibility of each Head of Department, with assistance from the Lower School Coordinators. Thereafter, it is the responsibility of each teacher teaching the subject to refer to long and medium term plans and to short term plan accordingly. The school has no set procedure for short term planning, preferring instead to allow each teacher the opportunity for individuality and flexibility.
- 4.5 Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all the children in the class. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs, but we treat them fairly, and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We set and agree with children the class code of conduct, and we expect all children to comply with this promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise children for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When children misbehave we follow the suggestions as outlined in our policy on behaviour.
- 4.6 We try to ensure that all tasks and activities that the children perform are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we follow a strict set of procedures to ensure safety: risk assessments are completed, and various permissions are obtained. We inform parents, and obtain their permission if necessary, before the visit takes place. All Departmental Handbooks carry a Health and Safety statement.

- 4.7 We deploy learning assistants and other adult helpers as effectively as possible. Sometimes they work with individual children, and sometimes they work with small groups. Our adult helpers also assist with the preparation and storage of classroom equipment.
- 4.8 Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays so that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children in many departments. We offer opportunities to pupils to display “best” work, though in Early Years and Lower School we try to ensure every child has work displayed. We also use displays as learning prompts for the children. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and that an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources, which results in high-quality work by the children.
- 4.9 All our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, and plan their professional development accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice.
- 4.10 We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.
- 4.11 Belmont is establishing itself as a virtual learning environment and is confident that vastly enhanced technology will allow pupils to access much greater resources, and will feed into a core aim to make our pupils independent learners.

## **5 The role of governors**

- 5.1 Our governors support the school’s approach to teaching and learning. In particular they:
- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
  - ensure that the school buildings and premises are used optimally to support teaching and learning;
  - check teaching methods in the light of health and safety regulations;
  - seek to ensure that our staff development and our performance management both promote good quality teaching;
  - monitor the effectiveness of the school’s teaching and learning approaches through the school’s self-review processes through the Headmistress’ termly report to governors.
- 5.2 Our governor with a specific monitoring brief for education is Dr Sarah Mackenzie- Ross.

## **6 The role of parents**

- 6.1 We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning:
- by holding parents’ evenings to explain our school strategies teaching and learning;
  - by sending information to parents, at the start of the academic year, which outlines the topics that the children will be studying during the year at school; in Early Years, details of topics are displayed in classrooms;
  - by sending parents regular reports in which we explain the progress made by each child, and indicate how the child can improve further;
  - We write to the parents of Year 7 & 8 pupils in November to explain the exams their children will take in January and our revision recommendations.
  - We write to all parents (Years 3-8) in May explaining the summer exams and setting out graduated revision recommendations according to the age of the pupils.

- We write to Year 8 parents in March outlining revision recommendations over Easter prior to the taking of Common Entrance in June.
- We write to all parents (Years 3-8) in late-August with details about such things as prep, teaching groups, and the “At Home Information Evenings” during which staff will address academic initiatives such as spellings, tables and reading records.
- explaining to parents how they can support their children.

6.2 We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would therefore like parents:

- to ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- to ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit;
- to do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- to inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child’s performance or behaviour;
- to promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general.

## **7 Monitoring and review**

7.1 We are aware of the need to monitor the school’s teaching and learning policy, and to review it regularly, so that we can take account of new initiatives and research, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. We will therefore review this policy every two years, or earlier if necessary.

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