



BARNARD CASTLE  
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

# Curriculum Policy

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## **Curriculum Aims**

Barnard Castle Prep School seeks to ensure that every pupil reaches their academic potential by offering challenging, demanding and exciting lessons delivered by passionate, informed and dynamic teachers. Pupils are helped by teachers to identify realistic and ambitious targets for both the fulfilment of potential and the achievement of personal goals.

We are all learners, and are thus receptive to new ideas. Teachers learn through INSET about different learning styles and teaching methods, including delivering the expected teaching standards; meeting the needs of the gifted and talented and those who have specific learning difficulties. We want classrooms to be active and engaging learning environments where young people collaborate in, share, and take ownership of their learning experiences, where they can concentrate, apply themselves and are motivated to succeed.

In order to prepare for adult life and life-long learning we aim for all our pupils to:

- develop enquiring minds with the motivation to learn
- achieve high standards and reach their potential across the curriculum
- develop the key qualities of a growth mindset
- acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes relevant to the changing world in which they live
- respect and value themselves, other people and the environment
- work both independently and collaboratively
- take responsibility for their own actions and make informed choices
- have well developed communication and social skills
- have self-confidence and high self-esteem
- recognise themselves as citizens of the wider world
- extend themselves in mind, body and spirit
- develop a strong sense of self supported by a clear set of values and beliefs

To achieve these aims we endeavour to provide the following:

- a welcoming, stimulating and safe learning environment
- high expectations of our pupils and ourselves
- a broad, balanced, creative and relevant curriculum
- high quality teaching using a variety of teaching strategies
- a range of resources that are effectively used to support learning
- equal access to all aspects of the curriculum and school life
- support, guidance and training for all those who teach and work with our pupils
- develop and maintain active partnerships between teachers and pupils, school and home, foster and maintain links with our local and the wider community
- recognise and celebrate achievements in all areas of school life
- work enthusiastically together to achieve our aims

All the pupils in the school will follow a full primary curriculum and the highest standards are sought in all areas. There are policy statements on specific subject areas, devised by staff and approved by the Senior Management Team. The curriculum endeavours to foster the development of key skills in communication, problem-solving, critical thinking, inquiry, investigation and analysis, and social and personal awareness and interaction. In particular, it places key emphasis on the acquisition of English and Mathematics skills.

The curriculum aims to ensure that pupils' experience of school, and the learning that takes place, will lead them to value and enjoy learning and develop the ability and the motivation to learn independently. Every aspect of 'life at Barney' invests in giving pupils the skills and attributes needed to shape the workplace and wider world they will inherit.

We encourage pupils to develop a Growth Mindset. It is worth emphasising from the outset that Growth Mindset is not a new curriculum but simply an approach to learning in school and life beyond. Research by Developmental Psychologist Dr Carol Dweck of Stanford University points to people having one of two mindsets: **Growth** and **Fixed**. A child's belief about intelligence is an important factor in whether they become an effective learner. We all hold beliefs about concepts such as 'intelligence', 'ability' and 'personality'; at Barnard Castle Prep School we strive to develop a Growth Mindset in all our learners through a network of support, encouragement and the nurturing of a healthy relationship (and understanding) of failure. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their progress as learners and become a more active partner in their education, taking ownership of their development and gaining both confidence and independence with tasks.

The curriculum emphasises the need for greater attention to be paid to pupils who have Special Educational Needs and emphasises the importance of achieving functional English and Mathematics. It also draws attention to the needs of gifted pupils, striving to stretch and challenge pupils with a diverse range of activities and tasks designed to engage and extend whilst allowing them to demonstrate responsibility for their learning.

### **Structure and Content of Curriculum**

The curriculum is divided into three stages:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception)
- Key Stage 1 (Year 1 and Year 2)
- Key Stage 2 (Year 3 to Year 6)

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

Effective activities are planned in the following seven areas of learning:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Further details about the Early Years Foundation Stage can be found in the 'Early Years Foundation Stage Policy'.

### **Key Stage 1**

Key Stage 1 starts at the beginning of Year 1 (aged five) and finishes at the end of Year 2 (aged seven). We broadly follow the Programmes of Study for Key Stage 1 and 2 as set out in the National Curriculum 2014. During this time pupils are assessed both formally (PiM / PiE / NGRT where appropriate) and informally.

The core subjects are:

- English: Spoken Language; Reading; Writing; Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation
- Mathematics: Number; Measurement; Geometry and Statistics
- Science: Working Scientifically; Plants, Animals including Humans; Everyday Materials; Seasonal Changes and Habitats
- Computing

Foundation subjects are taught through topic work and include:

- Design and Technology: Designing; Making
- History: Chronology; Historical Knowledge and Understanding; Historical Interpretation; Historical Enquiry; Organisation and Communication
- Geography: Geographical Skills; School Locality; A Contrasting Locality; Fieldwork Investigations
- Art and Design: Investigating and Making; Knowledge and Understanding
- Music: Performing Skills; Composing Skills; Appraising Skills; Listening and Applying Knowledge and Understanding; Listening and Appraising
- Physical Education, Swimming and Games
- Religious Education: Learning about Religion and Learning from Religions
- PSHCEE
- French

Teachers need to take account of pupils at different stages of development in Key Stage 1 with regard to the following principles for an inclusive, diverse and creative curriculum:

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils
- Prepare them for Key Stage 2

### **Key Stage 2**

Key Stage 2 starts at the beginning of Year 3 (aged 7) and finishes at the end of Year 6 (aged 11). We broadly follow the Programmes of Study for Key Stage 1 and 2 as set out in the National Curriculum 2014.

The core subjects are:

- English: Spoken Language; Reading and Writing including Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation
- Mathematics: Number; Measure; Geometry; Statistics; Ratio and Proportion; Algebra
- Science: Working Scientifically; Plants; Animals; Rocks; Light; Forces; Habitats; States of Matter; Sound; Electricity; Properties and Changes in Materials; Earth and Space; Evolution
- Computing

Foundation subjects are:

- Art and Technology: Designing; Investigating and Making; Knowledge and Understanding
- History: Chronology; Range and Depth of Historical Knowledge and Understanding; Interpretations of History; Historical Enquiry; Organisation and Communication
- Geography: Geographical Skills; Places; Thematic Study
- Music: Performing and Composing; Listening and Appraising
- Physical Education: Games; Running; Gymnastics; Athletics; Swimming; Dance
- Religious Education
- PSHCEE (to include sex education in Year 6)
- Modern Foreign Languages (Including French, Spanish and German)

The Schemes of Work set out what pupils should be taught in each subject and provides the basis for planning, including a common planning framework from Year 1 to Year 6. The following teaching requirements should be considered when planning:

- inclusion
- use of language across the curriculum
- use of ICT across the curriculum
- health and safety
- SMSC
- Links to other areas of the curriculum
- Variety of the tasks set and new ideas, resources and philosophies within teaching
- Creativity and the opportunity to approach a concept or task in as adventurous and engaging way as possible

Schemes of Work in each of the subject areas are to be found in the School's Policy Document Files. These schemes are available to parents upon request.

### **Flexibility**

Teachers are expected to produce medium and short-term plans. Copies of medium-term plans are saved on the shared staff network and are checked by the Director of Studies termly. Although it is important to plan thoroughly, it should not be at the expense of flexibility. Many external events happen in the busy life of the school that provide excellent learning opportunities. Teachers should grasp these chances and create learning situations that are meaningful and interesting for pupils. Plans are made to be adapted or abandoned if something proves to be incorrectly geared to the abilities or interests of the pupils concerned. If an entire project is to be altered, please inform the Subject Co-ordinator and Director of Studies.

### **Allocation of Time**

At Key Stage 1 pupils usually spend their mornings learning English and Mathematics, where possible. Subject specialists at certain points in the week teach PE, Music and French. Older pupils have lessons that last forty minutes for morning sessions and thirty five minutes for afternoon sessions.

Year 3 are predominantly class-taught with specialist teaching in Art and Technology, Music, PE, Modern Foreign Languages and Swimming.

From Year 4 specialist teaching takes place more widely, enabling teachers to develop interests in certain subjects and use is occasionally made of the expertise of our Senior School colleagues. The following weekly allocation of time takes place at KS2:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Number of periods</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Number of periods</b>
English	9	Mathematics	9
Science	3	History	2
Geography	2	Languages	2
Art & Technology	3	PSHCEE	1
Music	2	PE incl. Swimming	2
RE	1	Computing	1
Games	3		

NB: Drama is taught as one of the allocated English lessons in Year 6.

Pupils in Years 1, 3 and 5 are given one afternoon every fortnight of Forest School provision on a rotating two weekly cycle (when not in Forest School they have an afternoon of Humanities).

### **Homework**

Homework is set for the following reasons:

- To help pupils make more rapid progress in learning
- To enable pupils to develop the skills needed to learn independently
- To reinforce skills and concepts learned in the classroom
- To involve parents in their children's education
- To form a link with the methods of study used in Senior School
- To allow pupils to take their learning beyond the boundaries of the classroom and involve their own interests in taking greater responsibility for their learning

In the Pre-Prep Department, reading books are taken home as a matter of course and other small tasks are also set at the discretion of the class teacher. Years 1 and 2 receive weekly spellings to learn and are tested the following week.

In Reception, pupils receive nightly tasks linked to phonics and reading during the Michaelmas term. During the Lent term they continue to be given nightly tasks, including those for Maths, but these are to be completed over a longer timeframe. To reinforce the learning that has taken place that day, and to be supportive, the premise of 'little and often' is a successful way for young children to practise and retain new information.

In Years 1 and 2 these principles are built on with pupils having a more rigid pattern of homework, including weekly spellings and daily reading. By the end of Year 2 pupils can expect to receive two to three homework tasks a week ranging from concept specific tasks to a more independent task designed to prepare them for Year 3 (e.g. practise tying shoelaces or tying a tie).

When pupils reach Year 3 they embark on an engaging a mix of supportive tasks and those with the freedom to develop a concept or an idea beyond that covered in class. Typically pupils will be given:

- One Maths task a week
- One English task (in addition to spellings and reading)
- One night of computer based homework (this will be Mangahigh initially but pupils may wish to use this time to make use of ICT to further develop their 'Takeaway' homework task
- One night of 'Takeaway' homework, covering Science, Geography, History and Languages. These are traditionally done on a four week rotation
- One 'spare night' where pupils, many of whom are involved in the school's extensive extra-curricular programme, are able to catch up on, or extend, tasks set during the week that they may not have been able to give sufficient time to

Takeaway tasks are designed to give the pupils freedom over how they either 'show what they know' and showcase skills and ideas covered during recent topics, or go deeper into a unit and research around a particular concept. Pupils choose the task from a list supplied by the class teacher and complete it for current areas of learning. Example tasks include: making a video to explain a concept in Maths or to detail a conversation in German; build a model which explains a recent geographical process; design a storyboard for a short film, teaching younger pupils about a particular concept.

The time given for each task will be at the teacher's discretion and designed to give pupils enough time to complete homework to a high standard whilst still enabling staff to provide insightful and targeted feedback (it should be noted that given the scope and quality of the work received, the teacher may not directly write on the piece but will give verbal feedback as well as written feedback detailed elsewhere). By allowing a greater period of time, staff are providing pupils with the chance to clarify any issues at the earliest opportunity.

Homework is given to pupils in Years 3 to 6 on Mondays to Fridays inclusive. The duration of the homework should be approximately 30-40 minutes.

Homework is set in accordance with the homework timetable, which is organised by the class teacher at the start of the academic year.

Each pupil will have a homework diary to record homework daily. The diary is to be signed daily by both the parent and the class teacher.

Homework for Years 3 to 6 may be done at school between 4:00pm and 4:45pm. On these occasions the teachers on duty will supervise it.

Homework should be purposeful and related to ongoing class work. Each pupil should have a reading book. It is recognised that pupils in the same class will take varying times to complete homework tasks. Differentiation is also carefully considered when setting homework. Takeaway tasks are designed so that all pupils can attempt the same activity and it is understood that each pupil will approach a task in their own way and produce work that is of their best, regardless of what others produce.

Work is also set over the holiday periods, as and when appropriate.

Failure to complete homework:

- The teacher who sets the homework will have a discussion with the pupil to discover whether there is a good reason why the work has not been handed in. Extra time can be given.
- The teacher who sets the work will consult with the class teacher to discover if there are any mitigating factors regarding the pupil's failure to do their homework.
- The pupil may be told to attend a lunchtime session to do the work.
- The class teacher will inform the Head of Pastoral and, following consultation, may contact the parents.

### **Management of the Curriculum**

The curriculum is the responsibility of the Headmistress of the Prep School. The Director of Studies co-ordinates the curriculum along with the Curriculum Leadership Team. This involves monitoring work, peer observation in line with ISI guidelines, mentoring, checking teachers' planning, managing a budget that ensures that their subject is well resourced, find/devise new, interesting and exciting resources and share these with teachers, advising teachers on curriculum matters and ensuring that assessment is regular and informative. Close co-operation exists with the Academic Support Department; the Director of Studies and the Academic Support Co-ordinator meet as and when required to discuss matters of concern.

Each subject has a Subject Co-ordinator who is responsible for long term plans and development plans, they will meet with the Headmistress and Director of Studies to discuss their plans for the curriculum moving forward and any implications this may have. They advise teachers on subject matter, taking responsibility for co-ordinating the curriculum for their subject.

Whilst their roles are constantly evolving, some specific requirements of the role include being a passionate and enthusiastic advocate of the subject; instilling new ideas and teaching methods into the school; identifying opportunities for relevant staff INSET (including supporting the induction of new staff); producing policy documents (and termly curriculum guides) as well as implementing and upholding school policies.

The subject Curriculum Co-ordinators are:

English and Drama	Rebecca Robertson
Mathematics	Simon Ayres
Science	Mark Langley
PSHCEE	Louise Rowlandson/Rebecca Robertson
History	Claire Priestley
Geography	Ruth Thompson
Languages	Jennifer Strachan
PE and Games	Martin Burgess
Art and Technology	Emma Small
Music	Robin Harrison
RE	Fiona Killeen
Computing	Alexandra White
EYFS	Claire Bale



### **Setting by Ability**

There is a wide range of abilities in each class in the school. In order to work at a level and pace suitable to the majority of pupils, setting may take place in English and Mathematics. By Year 5, pupils are generally set by ability for both English and Mathematics.

Setting arrangements may be changed from year to year, taking in to account the educational and emotional needs of each particular year group. If, for example, it was felt that, for a specific cohort of pupils, the benefit, pastorally, of more class-based teaching outweighed the benefit academically of setting, setting may not take place for that year only.

### **Teaching and Learning**

Teachers have the freedom to present their lessons in ways that best suit the activity being undertaken. There are many strategies that help to create a good learning environment for all pupils. Our aim is to make learning enjoyable and stimulating, to challenge pupils to develop enquiring minds and, ultimately, become independent learners. To do this we need to constantly review the ways in which we deliver the curriculum.

### **Teaching**

#### **1. The teacher's responsibility:**

- the teacher is responsible for all matters relating to teaching within the class; this includes, but is not limited to, learning, progress and attainment of each pupil
- the teacher is responsible to the Headmistress and should seek advice and help as and when required

#### **2. Aims of teaching:**

- to promote independent learning
- to promote education in its broadest sense, recognising opportunities for furthering pupils' knowledge and understanding of important universal topics
- to allow pupils to develop a growth mindset
- to teach pupils efficiently and effectively
- to help pupils learn quickly and successfully
- to engage pupils with the required subject knowledge
- to promote curiosity and eagerness to learn
- to promote the needs of the pupil through successful differentiation of materials and tasks
- to improve teaching skills over time

**3. Professional practice:**

- to complete appropriate training courses and have qualified teacher status
- to undertake a period of induction successfully
- to become a successful practitioner over time, undertaking appropriate INSET
- to develop the confidence to reflect on successes and weaknesses positively
- to become a critical reflective practitioner, in part through appraisal
- to share good practice with others
- to stay up to date with current trends, movements, practices etc.

**4. To be efficient and effective, the teacher should:**

- plan and organise teaching efficiently; create and use schemes of work
- adhere to policy relating to teaching
- supply the information required to promote effective learning in a clear, precise and informed way, throughout the duration of a lesson
- be sufficiently knowledgeable to provide accurate information, particularly when answering more challenging questions and promoting learning amongst the most talented
- be aware of the more important current issues within the subject
- engage pupils by communicating efficiently to promote learning
- identify clear aims and objectives for lessons for pupils
- sequence learning for pupils by setting related tasks to progress learning
- promote the optimum rate of progress for each learner
- take into account pupils' different learning styles and rates
- differentiate tasks according to ability and outcome
- mark work efficiently in line with the school Marking Policy, ensuring this is done regularly and positively
- ensure pupils in the class learn from corrections made to their work
- adapt teaching strategies to meet the needs of those with specific learning difficulties or those who have English as a second language
- report on pupils' progress and attainment
- use the school's system of rewards and sanctions to motivate, reward and encourage pupils
- recognise risks and promote safe practice, ensuring welfare and safety of each pupil

**5. Good relationships between teacher and pupils:**

- good relationships depend on teachers and pupils working together successfully
- teachers will need to gain the academic confidence and personal confidence of pupils in their classes
- pupils will need to work in a disciplined and motivated manner to take advantage of learning opportunities
- good relationships between teachers and pupils will enhance learning opportunities of pupils

- 6. Teaching communication will be improved by:**
- using multi-sensory learning techniques and using a variety of teaching stimuli
  - using a range of teaching styles
  - using a range of resources to promote inquiry, thought and action
  - answering questions in a way which stimulates thought
  - asking questions which promote learning
  - appealing to a range of learning styles, making links to other areas of the curriculum
- 7. A successful lesson will have:**
- clearly defined and shared aims and objectives
  - clear targets for learning within the class
  - a variety of teaching techniques and approaches to promote the learning of each pupil
  - a range of stimuli including texts, equipment and materials
  - clear explanation and instruction
  - opportunities to answer and ask questions to enhance learning
  - occasions when learners are required to demonstrate their knowledge
  - a concise recap of key points learnt at the end of a lesson and reference to the next lesson's learning objectives
  - sufficient pace to maintain and promote interest, enthusiasm and motivation for learning
  - a cross-curricular focus
  - clear links to the key principles of a growth mindset
  - opportunities for pupils to work in a variety of ways
  - opportunities to develop independence of thought and for pupils to challenge themselves

### **Questioning**

Effective questioning may optimise the interaction between pupils and teachers. Questioning, either by the teacher or between the pupils, is a crucial part of review following guided practice or at the end of the lesson. At Barnard Castle Prep School we endeavour to use a variety of questions for a range of purposes (analysis, evaluation, comprehension, synthesis, processes). Questioning is used effectively when the answer is used to inform the next step in a pupil's education, be it to find and fill gaps in knowledge or to challenge them to apply their own understanding in a new way. Not only do we ask a variety of questions, we ask them in a range of ways – as a starter, quizzes, to gauge the progress of both individuals and cohorts. Answers may be anonymous or may not always be recorded, as fits their purpose.

We give pupils plenty of experience of interactive lessons, and create a non-evaluative, positive ethos, supported by our firm belief in the power of a growth mindset. Pupils are more likely to get involved if they feel that a wrong response will not elicit criticism or ridicule from either the teacher or their fellow pupils.

Prompting can be useful to help pupils answer questions. There are three kinds of prompts:

- Verbal prompts: These include cues, reminders, instructions, tips, references to previous lessons, or giving part sentences for pupils to complete.
- Gestural prompts: The teacher models the behaviour of pupils so as to pre-empt any mistake, e.g. by pointing to the object they want a pupil to use, or showing how to hold a pen correctly.
- Physical prompts: These may be necessary among young learners. For example, if the pupil cannot yet hold a pencil or form letters or numbers, you can take their hand and guide them.

It is best to use mainly verbal prompts, to prevent pupils becoming overly dependent on your guidance.

### **Ensuring Files and Exercise Books are kept in a Good State**

The Director of Studies will regularly check that books have been marked. We look for pupils' work to be well presented and with a sense of pride, following the guidelines laid out at the front of Maths and English books. Feedback is constructive, linked to both the learning objective and expectations specific to the pupil. Feedback takes many forms but is evident throughout the book, it is constructive, falls within the school's Marking Policy, and time is given for pupils to act upon any instruction or advice contained within.

Not all pupils' best work or learning takes place in books and so it is important that in these instances other forms of recording are considered, such as photography. It is also important that pupils are involved in recording such work, either through explaining/evidencing photos or recounting any practical sessions and their findings.

### **Learning**

#### **1. Learning:**

Learning is the acquisition of knowledge, skills and ideas over time; for some young people, this process is more easily developed, perhaps being intuitive. For others, a much greater effort needs to be made to learn efficiently and effectively.

#### **2. Learning as a Process:**

In earlier years, learning is principally facilitated through teaching, by parents and teachers most specifically. As age increases, the older pupil is encouraged to become more responsible for learning, develop increased independence and the facility to analyse and evaluate.

#### **3. The Role of Teachers:**

Teachers promote learning opportunities by:

- developing pupils as learners, allowing them to grow and improve
- giving pupils a chance to fail and learn from their mistakes
- presenting information, skills and ideas in a straightforward and digestible form
- encouraging pupils to apply these to similar or contrasting situations to develop further learning and understanding

- testing the acquisition of knowledge, skills and ideas to check effective learning and understanding
- reinforcing knowledge, skills and ideas acquisition, or by correcting mistakes and reinforcing corrected material
- building upon learnt knowledge, skills and ideas with extension exercises, according to ability and aptitude

#### 4. Pupils' Learning Styles:

Most pupils have one dominant learning style:

- **Visual Learners** remember what is seen; research suggests this is a preferred learning mode for the majority. These pupils are likely to be well-organised and tidy in their work, they plan ahead, like detail and present work on time. They like pictorial lessons but don't listen well. They can day-dream and when checked draw, scribble or doodle as you talk. Visual learners often remark, "That looks right to me" and "I can see what you mean" or "I can picture the scene".

*The visual learner will need to use pictures or diagrams, and want to highlight and colour-code work. They will be keen to obtain hand-outs and do practical demonstrations to maximise learning potential.*

- **Auditory Learners** remember what is heard and this is likely to be a minority of pupils. They talk to themselves and mouth words; they like speeches or singing and telling jokes. They prefer verbal instructions, are easily distracted by noise; they listen well. They remember by listening and can recall conversations. They often say, "That rings a bell" or "That sounds great to me!".

*Auditory learners will learn quicker through explanation, repetition and discussion. They like to use recordings, poems, tell stories, use dialogue, enjoy drama and ask to read aloud. These are their preferred learning strategies.*

- **Kinaesthetic Learners** remember when they use their hands or whole body to learn. This may well apply to a large proportion of pupils in your class. They like physical activity, move around a lot and very often fidget. They remember by doing, using gestures and movement to demonstrate ideas. They need to visit a place to remember it. They often say, "Can we do that now?" or "Can I have a go?".

*Kinaesthetic learners are practical, want to make things and produce models. They prefer tactile experiences, move about when learning, and write or jot notes. For them, activity promotes the fastest learning.*

- 5. The Impact a Teacher's Preferred Learning Style has on Teaching:**  
In the same way that learners have a preferred learning style, a teacher's style will be influenced by a teacher's preferred method of learning. If a teacher uses a variety of different activities and methods to promote learning amongst pupils, there is more likely to be an overall increase in individual and group learning rates.

Teachers will best promote pupil learning by drawing on a wide range of approaches to accommodate the various learning needs of pupils. When planning their lessons, teachers should recognise the need for a variety of approaches to meet pupils' different learning styles.

- 6. Learning is Enhanced by:**
- enabling pupils to make links between concepts and other subject areas for themselves
  - using a multi-sensory method to learn (involving writing, speaking, reading, writing and doing)
  - applying knowledge, ideas and skills to situations
  - researching further information as a result of teacher encouragement and individual initiative
  - meaningful and inspiring homework
  - effective revision for tests
- 7. Teachers and Learners Promote the Effectiveness of Learning:**
- where positive relationships exist
  - in a positive learning environment, for example, a classroom which breathes energy as a result of display, colour, image and demonstration equipment
  - where the learner is encouraged and feels empowered to learn
  - where relevant discussion occurs freely and often
  - where the teacher is encouraged by learners to develop answers, illustrate these and give extended explanations

**8. Differentiation of Tasks to Promote Learning**

It is important to set up challenging tasks for all pupils within the ability range of a class. Whilst the ability range may well be narrower in those subjects where setting operates, it will be greater in those subjects where setting does not apply as rigorously. Such differentiation of tasks is important to ensure each pupil is challenged and that the progress of each pupil is significant. The more able are best challenged with extension tasks; these should not just be additional work but additional opportunities to research, inform and learn. They should be rich with challenge and allow pupils to either derive new learning independently or apply existing knowledge in a new way. Others, and those with specific learning difficulties, will benefit from different challenges, as well as from working with more able pupils on collaborative tasks.

## 9. Evaluating the Success of Pupils' Learning

This can be judged by:

- the Director of Studies and the CLT looking at exam results in order to identify trends or any subject areas or pupils in need of support
- assessing pupils' progress during the lesson and over the short-term assessment period
- studying the results of pupils' attainment, particularly external examinations commensurate with their age, abilities and circumstances
- assessing pupils' ability to see the relevance of previous learning and their ability to apply this to new situations
- assessing pupils' application of skills, such as ICT competence, research or library skills
- observing pupils' attitudes to learning, particularly their motivation, concentration, interest, persistence and co-operation; here objective comment and assessment by colleagues in the department can be useful
- listening to pupils as they communicate information and ideas
- posing questions and asking pupils to solve these and problems
- asking pupils to evaluate their work and to identify how it might be improved
- use of effective feedback strategies for pupils, such as plickers, mini quiz, voting pads etc.

## **Teaching and Learning**

### **Experiences and Skills**

By the time pupils leave Barnard Castle Preparatory School, pupils should have experience in:

### **Application of number**

- Interpreting numerical information
- Carrying out calculations
- Interpreting results and presenting findings, generally
- Using graphs and charts
- Using diagrams
- Using maps
- Using other methods

### **Communication**

- Discussions
- Presenting
- Reading and obtaining information
- Reading and summarising information
- Reading and synthesising information
- Writing documents in general
- Drafting/redrafting information
- Organising information
- Using images
- Using a range of sources of information
- Using different forms/styles to suit audience
- Using different forms/styles to suit situation
- Using specialist vocabulary/language/notation

### **Improving own learning and performance**

- Reflecting on themselves as learners
- Developing an understanding of their preferred learning style
- Setting targets
- Using a plan
- Reviewing progress and achievements
- Information technology
- Using ICT to find, develop and present information

### **Problem solving**

- Confirming/identifying problems and options
- Planning and trying out options
- Checking if problems have been solved
- Work collaboratively with others
- Develop independence of thought and of task
- Develop a healthy relationship with failure

### **Working with others**

- Planning work
- Working towards objectives
- Identifying objectives
- Reviewing work
- Working in groups
- Working in pairs

### **Thinking skills**

- Critical reasoning skills
- Creative thinking
- Generating ideas
- Developing ideas
- Hypothesising
- Applying imagination
- Seeking innovative alternatives

### **Enquiry**

- Asking questions
- Defining questions for enquiry
- Planning research
- Predicting outcomes
- Anticipating consequences
- Drawing conclusions

### **Evaluation**

- Developing evaluation criteria
- Applying evaluation criteria
- Judging the value of information and ideas
- Information processing
- Finding relevant information
- Sorting/classifying/sequencing information
- Comparing/contrasting information
- Identifying and analysing relationships



## **Reasoning**

- Giving reasons for opinions/actions
- Inferring
- Making deductions
- Making informed judgements/decisions
- Using precise language to reason

## **Creating Effective Learning Environments**

Effective learning environments are created by ensuring:

- the contribution of all pupils is valued
- classrooms are visually stimulating
- all pupils can feel secure and are able to contribute appropriately
- stereotypical views are challenged and pupils learn to appreciate and view positively differences in others, whether arising from race, gender, ability or disability
- pupils learn to take responsibility for their actions and behaviours both in school and in the wider community
- all forms of bullying and harassment, including racial harassment, are challenged
- pupils are enabled to participate safely in clothing appropriate to their religious beliefs, particularly in subjects such as Science, Art and Technology and Physical Education

## **Displays and Physical Environment**

### **The Classroom**

Teachers are responsible for their teaching rooms. They have joint responsibility for shared areas. The following guidelines should be adhered to:

A well-managed classroom should:

- have flexible use of space in relation to the task in hand
- have ease of movement between activities in large or small groups and individual activity
- create an aesthetically pleasing and safe environment
- allow for opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own and others' work
- allow for sustained engagement in the development of work over an extended period
- be set out so that the arrangements for sharing and using resources are practical
- have a commitment to quality in pupils' learning
- encourage pupils to become more independent and autonomous

### **Displays**

High standard displays of pupils' work around our school promotes an atmosphere that is conducive to good work. Pupils gain self-confidence and pride in their efforts when they see their work on display. Visitors learn a great deal about our school from the displays that they see and the way it is presented. Displays are also a valuable teaching tool.

As a general rule, teachers will have one classroom in which they carry out the majority of their teaching. They will have responsibility for the displays in that room. The teachers will share responsibility for communal areas. This will be under the direction of the Subject Co-ordinators and the Director of Studies.

It is deemed preferable that the majority of displays will feature the work of pupils currently in our school rather than commercially produced material.

#### Guidelines for Displays:

- displays should be comprised of material that is labelled and well presented; they should be neat, tidy and visually attractive
- displays should feature the work of all pupils, not just a few
- displays should be related to recent or current learning topics
- displays should be changed regularly

#### **Providing Equality of Opportunity and Inclusion**

Inclusion is defined as providing effective learning opportunities for all pupils. The school has a responsibility to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. The National Curriculum is the starting point for planning a school curriculum that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of pupils. Please refer to our Equal Opportunities Policy and our Academic Support Policy for a detailed breakdown of the ways in which we aim to meet the needs of all pupils be they physical, emotional, linguistic or other.

#### **Assessing Pupils' Work**

Assessment refers to all the information teachers gather about pupils in the classroom, either through formal testing, essays and homework, or informally through observation and interaction. At Barnard Castle Prep School we use a range of assessment materials and strategies for a variety of purposes. We assess pupils regularly throughout the year using GL Assessment's Complete Digital Solution to monitor and track pupils' progress as well as allowing us to compare ourselves nationally. More details of how and when we assess can be found in our Assessment Policy.

#### **Performance Assessment**

The aim of performance assessment is to measure learning or performance directly in a natural classroom context, not through casual observation of pupils, but according to a deliberate and structured process. Standardisation is crucial to overcome problems of unreliability or bias when comparing the performance of different pupils.

#### **Managing Behaviour**

Teachers help pupils to manage their behaviour, take part in learning effectively and safely by:

- setting realistic demands and stating them explicitly
- using positive behaviour management, including a clear structure of rewards and sanctions
- giving pupils every chance and encouragement to develop the skills they need to work well with a partner or a group
- teaching pupils to value and respect the contribution of others
- encouraging and teaching independent working skills
- teaching essential safety rules

### **The Academic Support Department**

If a teacher is concerned about the progress made by a pupil the following steps should be taken:

- discuss the matter with the Academic Support Co-ordinator, including providing any relevant assessment data
- the Academic Support Co-ordinator will liaise with the subject teacher and class teacher to discuss whether a pupil may need testing
- parents will be informed of our concerns and permission to test the pupil will be sought
- once testing has taken place the Academic Support Co-ordinator will arrange a meeting to discuss the outcome with parents and teachers

The Director of Studies may request that a pupil be tested when monitoring standardised test results. Teachers must liaise with Academic Support staff on a regular basis so that target setting can take place. It is essential that we have common, achievable targets that are clearly understood by the pupil, the parents and those teaching the pupils. Where necessary the advice and support of external agencies will be sought.

Academic Support teachers usually withdraw pupils from lessons as they follow a set programme tailored to individual needs. They are excellent at providing advice and are always ready to help pupils overcome specific difficulties that they may face in class.

### **SMSC**

The school actively promotes the Spiritual, Moral and Cultural Development of its pupils through teaching and learning within the curriculum, weekly assemblies, the work and ethos of the School Council and activities. Pupils are taught about the Fundamental British Values, Democracy, the Rule of Law, Individual Liberty, Mutual Respect and Tolerance of those with Different Faiths and Beliefs. For more information please refer to our Pastoral Care and Welfare Policy.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

Outside the formal curriculum, the school is proud of its extensive programme of extra-curricular activities. This contributes significantly to the broad and balanced nature of the curriculum as well as developing pupils' mind, body and soul through a wide range of activities. During break times, lunchtime and after school, pupils may choose to follow activities of their choice. Through charitable activities, School Council and its initiatives, pupils' awareness of global issues are also enhanced. Extra-curricular activities allow pupils to reach the aims set out at the beginning of this document.

With pupils' knowledge and consent, and with the agreement of their parents, those pupils who receive academic support or individual specialist music tuition are withdrawn from classes for tuition.