**Great Ballard School Curriculum Policy**

The aims of the curriculum of Great Ballard School are:

1. To educate the pupils in a stimulating, demanding and caring environment

2. To instil in pupils the joy of learning and a desire to study whilst at school and

beyond into adult life

3. To prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life

in British society

4. To ensure that all pupils are able to achieve their full potential and to provide the time

and resources necessary for this to be achieved

5. To ensure that all subject matter is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of the

pupils, including those pupils with an EHC or who have been identified as

having a learning disability (SEND)

6. To encourage all pupils to develop an enquiring, lively, flexible mind;

conscientiousness and pride in their work; the desire to optimise their potential and

achieve their very best academically

7. To encourage in all pupils a sense of achievement and a belief in their own unique

abilities

8. To provide a broad and balanced curriculum to all pupils while considering the needs of

the National Curriculum

9. To ensure that the school’s curriculum and its materials do not undermine the

fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and

mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths, backgrounds, ethnicities

and beliefs.

10. To enable pupils to acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy

11. To offer a broad range of subjects at GCSE, and BTEC to enable all pupils

choices that suit their talents and their future aspirations

12. To impart to all pupils the necessary academic skills and self-discipline to enable

them to accept the opportunities offered by further education

13. To obtain the best possible external examination results for each pupil and for the

School as a whole.

**Pre-Prep Curriculum. EYFS to Year 2**

**Principles:**

The teaching within the Pre-Prep in tailored to the individual child. Teachers use a variety of delivery techniques encompassing aural, visual and kinaesthetic learners. The learning is as practical and stimulating as possible, incorporating our surroundings alongside encouraging and motivating the children to achieve and cement their learning. From Nursery to Form 2 activities are well-planned and aim to draw the best from each individual child whatever their strengths and talents. Schemes of work are planned to ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum.

The EYFS children are the inspiration for their teachers, following their interests and driving forward their learning in a supported environment. Activities are planned to stimulate the children whilst and drawing on and building their knowledge of the world around them.

The KS1 children are taught within half termly topics – encompassing all areas of the curriculum in relevant and inspiring ways. Each year group plans its own stimulating, child centred, lessons covering a range of exciting topics throughout the year. The curriculum in enhanced with outings and visitors to the school.

**Wellbeing** is a key factor to the children’s learning. They work alongside characters from the ‘iSpace Wellbeing’ resource. This provides children with a set of ‘tools’ to help them deal with issues that can arise at home or school. The children learn to relate to the characters Niam and Dunican and begin to develop with own self-awareness and positive mind-set.

All children are encouraged to develop a love of **reading** and books. Children start learning phonics in Nursery ready to begin their reading journey from Reception. Books are sent home once all basic letter sounds are in place. The expectation is that children will read and share their book at home and with an adult in school. Children are encouraged read little and often to foster the love of books and to embed the lifelong skill Children are encouraged to discuss their reading to develop language and comprehension. Story retellings and class stories form a great part of the learning to read journey.

**Phonics** are taught throughout Pre-Prep followingRead, Write, Inc. This builds the children’s skills in reading and writing alongside elements of spelling punctuation and grammar. Children from Reception to Form 2 are taught in small groups according to their ability. The small group sessions enable us to focus phonics teaching for the individual child.

**Literacy** is taught alongside the Read Write Inc. programme. Class based lessons allow for class topics to be incorporated and relevant texts explored. Story and letter writing, poetry and drama are included within these sessions encouraging the children to apply their RWI skills to all areas of their learning.

**Numeracy** skills are developed following the White Rose scheme. EYFS begin with a focus on number knowledge, counting, shape, size and simple measures. This learning continues to build and more skills, such as addition and subtraction are incorporated within the Reception curriculum. KS1 continue to follow the White Rose scheme again building on their prior learning. Differentiation is key to enabling the children to learn. Tailoring teaching methods to the individual child remains our focus throughout the numeracy lessons. An onus is put on becoming and independent and confident learner, using tools and techniques taught throughout the Pre-Prep. The cross curricular nature of our learning encourages children to consider and apply numeracy when exploring all areas of learning. Regular assessments and an annual formal assessment of progress in mathematics (PTM – GL assessment) are carried out and the results are recorded and monitored centrally.

**Computing** allows children access to desktop computers and Chromebooks with a range of age appropriate software. This develops a cross curricular link to literacy and numeracy. Children develop early coding and debugging skills using programmable toys such as ‘Roamer’ and then develop this further using other age appropriate programmes. Children are supported to develop a broad range of skills from mouse control and touch typing. Children are taught the importance of online safety.

**Music** is a key element of the curriculum. It forms a strong part of the celebrations and festivals within the school year. Children learn to appreciate different styles of music, learning lyrics to traditional songs and hymns. Teaching incorporates the basics of rhythm and beat alongside simple notation. Children learn to play a range of percussion instruments.

**Religious Studies** aims to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These sessions work very closely with the PSHSE curriculum and are accompanied by assemblies and celebrations. The children are introduced to different beliefs around the world in a sensitive way culminating in the teaching that everyone is an individual with different thoughts, ideas and beliefs and that all are to be respected. Bible stories are read alongside other material to support the moral and cultural understanding.

The **PSHSE** programme is designed to meet the aims of the school and the school ethos. A strong emphasis is placed on the development of moral values, the awareness of what it means to be a good citizen and respect for others and the environment.

The **Physical Education** curriculum encourages children to get moving and get involved. It draws on their skills and develops their key skills that they will need to participate in sports in the future. Control and teamwork are the basis throughout all areas, including games, dance and gymnastics. Cross curricular links are used to support the need for healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle.

**Prep School Curriculum Years 3-8**

**Principles**- The educational provision through Y3-Y8 takes the best from traditional and modern methods. Classes are taught in an ordered environment with structured lessons designed to stretch and challenge every child. A variety of teaching methods are used to ensure that every type of learner performs to his/her best ability. We believe that high expectations are the key to high achievement. The curriculum is broad and, although many academic subjects take the National Curriculum as their base, we extend beyond this in many ways. Subject matter is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils, including those pupils with an ECHP. Children are given the opportunity to work to a very high standard in the intellectual, physical and creative areas of the curriculum. The curriculum and education that pupils receive at Great Ballard enables them to acquire a broad knowledge and understanding of the world they live in and prepares them for the next stage of their education and for future life experiences. Pupils are encouraged to be active and independent in their learning, to participate in discussions, to take responsibility and assume leadership roles as they progress through the school. The curriculum is designed to be informing, creative, relevant and stimulating, and to allow scope for the pupils to develop their talents and interests and help to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. All pupils at Great Ballard have the opportunity to learn and make progress. Regular assessments and marking ensure that all pupils are monitored closely and the SENDCO notifies staff of any children with specific needs, who will need different teaching strategies, differentiated tasks and additional help to access the curriculum.

Our Effort, Attainment and Progress Review System used in the Prep School is a resource which enables staff and parents to monitor the children’s attainment and progress as they pass through the school. In addition, it records significant achievements and enables strategies to be put in place to support a child at an early stage, if required.

**Expectations of Staff**

Putting principles into practice: Staff are expected actively to promote and seek to secure the curriculum aims (above) and, in particular to

• have high expectations of pupils;

• employ a variety of appropriate teaching and learning methods;

• ensure that, wherever possible, pupils are found means of access to the

curriculum and given opportunities to succeed;

• deliver programmes of study which build upon pupils’ previous experiences,

providing progression and continuity;

• provide work which meets their pupils’ needs and aspirations, which offers depth and challenge and motivates and inspires them

• involve the learner in the process of learning, by discussing work, giving regular

feedback through assessment and marking, negotiating targets and encouraging

pupils to evaluate their own achievements;

• develop pupils’ skills to become independent learners who can enter society as

responsible and tolerant individuals;

• encourage, reward and value achievement and effort, both formally and informally,

through praise in the learning environment;

• work in partnership with other staff, parents and the wider community to achieve

shared goals;

• keep parents regularly and fully informed about the progress and achievements of

their sons and daughters.

**The Curriculum**

Our curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of educational experiences:

**Literacy skills** are predominantly delivered through the English curriculum although all teachers share some responsibility for the teaching of literacy. Progress and attainment are monitored regularly through assessments but also through annual formal standardised assessments, (PTE, NGRT, and NGST – GL assessment) the results of which are recorded and monitored centrally.

**Drama** is an important vehicle to aid the development of speaking and listening skills and this is further reinforced by optional LAMDA lessons, which some pupils choose to participate in. Drama at Great Ballard is an important educational experience with timetabled lessons provided for Years 3 to 8. Productions enable numbers of pupils to participate in performances throughout the course of the academic year; these are compulsory in Years 3 – 8.

**Numeracy** skills are mainly delivered through the mathematics curriculum and progress and attainment are assessed regularly at the end of topics. There is also an annual formal assessment of progress in mathematics (PTM – GL assessment) the results of which are recorded and monitored centrally. The Maths curriculum enables pupils to use and apply mathematics, understand shape, measures and data handling, develop a capacity for logical thinking and express themselves independently using number. All pupils are encouraged to explore mathematical problems in a variety of contexts and through a variety of subjects including Computer Science, DT, science and geography.

**Linguistics** are taught through French (currently Y6-Y8), Spanish (Y3-Y5)

**Science** is delivered through the science curriculum. This enables pupils to increase their knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces and develop enquiry skills, form hypotheses, conduct experiments and record their findings. The children use the science laboratory which is very well equipped.

**Computer Science** –This covers the following three strands: computational thinking, digital literacy and IT. Children develop an understanding of the key concepts ranging from organising and storing data to logical sequencing, program structure and simple algorithms. This is in addition to the use of software for word processing, spreadsheets and presentation, as well as research through the internet. Technological Skills & Digital Literacy are developed through each subject area where appropriate.

**DT** is taught to pupils in years 3-8. They are able to produce high quality products, evaluating their processes and methods.

**Religious Studies** (called Religion, Ethics and Philosophy in Years 7 and 8) delivers the Human and Social Education of our pupils, promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; this is reinforced further by assemblies and the house system and their participation in church services.

The **PSHSE** programme is designed to meet the aims of the school and the school ethos. A strong emphasis is placed on the development of moral values, the awareness of what it means to be a good citizen and respect for others and the environment.

The **Physical Education** curriculum and the Games programme enable all pupils to participate in a wide range of sporting and physical pursuits. In PSHSE and science, pupils are taught about the need for a balanced diet and healthy eating.

**Aesthetic and creative education** is delivered through Art and Design Technology where a broad range of media and approaches are explored. The display of art work is taken seriously and is a focus throughout the school and celebrated in the displays around the school as well as at exhibitions of the children’s work. The creative education of our pupils is also delivered through the music curriculum, which focuses on encouraging all the children to think of themselves as musicians. There are a wide range of peripatetic instrumental and vocal lessons available to the children and they are also able to participate in a selection of choirs.

**Learning Support** - The Learning Support Department provides support for those children with specific learning needs. Children receiving support generally attend lessons lasting 40 minutes once or twice a week Y3-Y8. All staff have access to the Learning Support Register on the school system which is kept up-to-date, changes are communicated to the staff though staff meetings. Throughout the year the register is updated as new pupils join or individual needs are identified. The Learning Support Register provides the teaching team with detailed information on all pupils who require learning support. Planning of differentiated tasks and activities in lessons is to ensure that subject matter and level is appropriately challenging for all our pupils

**ECHP** Where a pupil has an Education, Health and care Plan (ECHP) every effort is made to ensure that the needs of that pupil are properly provided for. The learning support team works closely with teachers to ensure they are fully informed about the needs of the pupils and to advise on the best teaching strategies for them. Children with ECHPs for educational needs may find the curriculum at Great Ballard difficult to access so differentiation and support is key. Children with ECHPs for physical needs who are able to access the curriculum are well supported and contribute greatly to the life of the school.

**Pupils classed as ‘Able, Gifted or Talented’**

A register is kept of all pupils who we consider are ‘Able, Gifted or talented’. These pupils are invited to attend art excellence classes, join the Chamber Choir or the ‘drama excellence group’ as part of an extension programme. We have had many scholarship successes over the years – particularly in art – and pupils are prepared well. Any pupil who is considered to be ‘gifted’ academically may well be moved up a year and extension work is given in the appropriate subject areas.

**Careers Education** is covered through assemblies, talks from visiting parents and professionals who are invited into school to speak to the children about various issues, including their jobs. In Forms 7 and 8, in subjects like cookery, pupils organise events whereby pupils have to phone businesses, design, and produce and market a product or event. In addition, the PSHSE curriculum enables the children to consider themselves and their strengths and weaknesses and thus relate these to the world of work.

**Curriculum Structure**

**The timetable** - The Prep School operates a 49 lesson week.

• All lessons last 40 minutes with some lessons being timetabled for a double period

• For Years 5-8 there are 10 lessons on Monday/Tuesday/Thursday (normally five in the morning and five in the afternoon) 8 – 9 lessons on a Wednesday as it their sports matches afternoon and 9 lessons on a Friday as there is assembly and hymn practice at the end of the day.

• For Years 3-4 there are 10 lessons on Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday (normally five in the morning and five in the afternoon) 8 – 9 lessons on a Thursday as it their sports matches afternoon and 9 lessons on a Friday as there is assembly and hymn practice at the end of the day.

**Senior School Curriculum Years 9-11**

Our aim is to provide a broad curriculum that enables all pupils to learn and make progress so that they are effectively prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in a British society. All pupils of compulsory school age receive a full-time, supervised education which gives them experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human, social, physical, aesthetic and creative fields. They acquire speaking, listening, and numeracy skills and are encouraged to respect other people through the personal, social, health and economic education programme. Secondary age pupils have access to accurate, impartial, up-to-date careers guidance which enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options and helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential.

Senior and Prep School Heads of Departments liaise to ensure that Schemes of Work are coordinated and suitable for the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with an Education, Health and Care plan. Opportunities for the effective application of ICT to enhance studies are identified and lesson planning takes into account the differing needs of individual pupils.

Year 9 - 11 pupils embark upon a curriculum which covers five compulsory core subjects (English Language and English Literature, Mathematics, Dual Award Science, and Computer Science). Pupils will take GCSEs in all of these subjects with the exception of computer science which would be an option choice. Those pupils wishing to take all 3 sciences would choose the third science as one of their option choices. Pupils also choose three optional subjects from: French, Geography, History, Art, PE or Music. These subjects are taught in 42 periods of 40 minutes –some of which will be double lessons) per fortnight. In addition there are 2 sports/fitness Sessions, Tutor Periods and PSHCE (which incorporates personal, social, health and economic education and careers guidance), D of E and a service (volunteer) afternoon.

Pupils who require Learning Support or English as a Second Language do not follow the full curriculum in order that these extra lessons can be fitted into their timetables.

**Curriculum Structure**

**The timetable** - The Senior School operates a 49 lesson week.

• All lessons last 40 minutes with some lessons being timetabled for a double period

• For Years 9-11 there are 10 lessons on Monday/Tuesday/Thursday (normally five in the morning and five in the afternoon) 5 lessons on a Wednesday morning and Wednesday afternoon is their volunteering/D of E afternoon (the equivalent of 3-4 lessons) and 8 lessons on a Friday as there is assembly and hymn practice at the end of the day and their weekly Tutor lesson (40 minutes).

Clare Thomas October 2020