



# BALLARD

BESPOKE EDUCATION

CURRICULUM POLICY	
<b>Reviewed by:</b>	<b>Matthew Higgins – Deputy Head Academic</b>
<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>September 2023</b>
<b>Next Review due:</b>	<b>September 2024</b>

## Curriculum Policy

### INTRODUCTION

Ballard School provides an academically challenging, and supportive environment for learning, based on Quality First Teaching, designed to help all pupils achieve their personal best. High academic standards, together with thorough preparation for future education and the world of work, are underpinned by the Ballard Values and an awareness of the rights and duties of a good citizen. The diverse range of activities and broad curriculum nurture self-confidence in all our pupils and help the development of their personality, engendering lifelong interests and stimulating a desire to serve the community.

The School's curriculum aims to offer a broad and balanced education reflecting the needs of pupils of all abilities and across the full age range.

The Ballard Curriculum aims:

- To contribute effectively to pupils' intellectual, physical, and personal attainment and development.
- To be appropriate for the age, ability, gender, and ethnic background of all pupils.
- To prepare the pupils for the next stage in their education, training, or employment.
- To provide continuity and progression through the key stages, so that learning thresholds are achieved.
- To provide a suitable and effective learning environment for all pupils including those requiring special provision, most able or Potential Plus pupils and those with any form of learning difficulty.
- To provide an equality of opportunity for all pupils to learn and progress.
- To provide access to a wide range of co-curricular activities for the purpose of enrichment.
- To foster an environment where each pupil becomes an independent learner.

### Breadth of the Ballard Curriculum

The curriculum offered at Ballard School aims to provide a wide range of opportunity in order to promote effective learning and personal growth. Schemes of work are in place for all subject areas and key stages. The School's curriculum aims to provide all pupils of compulsory school age with an experience in the following areas:

- Linguistic and cultural
- Mathematical
- Scientific
- Technological
- Human and social
- Physical
- Aesthetic and creative

For a full description of the School's contribution to each area of experience please refer to Appendix 1.

## Teaching Week

The teaching week is designed around a one-week teaching cycle of the following hours:

- Pre-Prep:  
5 days; 3 lessons in the morning and 3 lessons in the afternoon, totalling 5 hours lesson time throughout the day.
- Lower Prep:  
5 days; 3 x 50-minute lessons in the morning and 3 x 50-minute lessons in the afternoon.
- Upper Prep:  
5 days; 4 x 50-minute lessons in the morning and 2 x 50-minute lessons in the afternoon.
- Senior School:  
5 days; 4 x 50-minute lessons in the morning and 2 x 50-minute lessons in the afternoon.

There are double lessons to provide more opportunities to take place in the curriculum, for example Maths, English and Science and the creative subjects.

## Organisation of the Curriculum

The curriculum is organised so that teaching groups are small. It is the aim to keep the maximum class size below 20, with the exception of PE, Expressive Arts and PSHE which are taught as a year group. In the School, the average size of each teaching group is most likely to be 16. The higher ability sets within the core subjects have the higher-class sizes, the lower ability sets having the smaller numbers to ensure closer and more individual support.

The School currently groups children for teaching in several different ways:

- Form groups - mixed ability
- Sets - grouped by underlying ability and previous attainment
- Bands - higher and lower, based on prior attainment
- GCSE years only - Option blocks (mixed ability or sets depending on numbers)

## Criteria for Banding

The School sometimes operates a banding system in selected year groups. The decision to stream is reviewed every year for each year group and is based on both the individual needs and ability range of pupils within the year group. Every child is looked at on an individual basis before being placed in a stream and the following areas are taken into consideration:

- Academic abilities; which considers the end of year attainment in formal examinations, from GL assessments, teacher assessment, as well as the verbal and non-verbal reasoning scores.
- Learning differences; where a specific difficulty is preventing a pupil from scoring highly in more formal tests but has strong underlying ability.
- Pastoral needs; where we feel a pupil would benefit from a chance to consolidate more often or a more challenging approach to academics.
- Social needs; where a pupil is known to work particularly well within a specific group of individuals.

**Curriculum Model**

**Pre-Prep**

Year	English	Maths	Science	RS	Art/Link Topic/Humanities Teacher & Pupil Led Activities	Food Technology	French	Music	Forest School/Yoga/LT	Dance	ICT	Golden Time	PSHE/PSHD	PE	
R	5	5		1	8	1		1	2	1		2	1	3	
1 Form															
1	5	5	1	1	5	1	1	1			1	1	1	1	3
1 Form															
2	5	5	1	1	5	1	1	1			1	1	1	1	3
1 Form															

**Curriculum Rotations/Specific Setup:**

Forest School operates on a two-week rotation alongside Yoga and Link Topics.

**Lower Prep**

Year	English	Maths	Science	Humanities	RS	French	Spanish	Art	Design and Food Technology	Music	Expressive Arts	Forest School	IT/Life Skills	PE & Dance	PSHE
	Form	Form	Form	Form	Form	Form	Form	Form	Mixed	Form	Mixed	Form	Form	Year	Form
3	6	5	2	2	1	1		2		1	2	2		5	1
2 Forms											Y3/4				
4	6	5	2	2	1	1		2		1	2	2		5	1
2 Forms											Y3/4				
5	5	5	2	2	1	1	1	2		1	2	2		5	1
2 Forms											Y5/6				

**Curriculum Rotations/Specific Setup:**

Forest School operates on a rotation with ICT & Life Skills.

Expressive Arts is taught with Years 3 & 4 together and Years 5 & 6 together.

Design Tech, Art and Food Tech rotate every term.

**Upper Prep**

Year	English	Maths	Science	History	Geography	RS	Art	Design and Food Technology	ICT	Music	PSHE	PE & Dance	MFL	Drama	Dance	Expressive Arts		
	Form	Set	Form	Form	Form	Form	Form	Mixed	Form	Form	Year	Year	Set	Drama	Dance	Form		
6	4	4	3	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	5	2					2
2 Forms		2 sets											French Spanish					Y5/6
	Form	Set	Form	Form	Form	Form	Form	Mixed	Form	Form	Year	Year	Set	Form	Form			
7	4	4	3	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	4	3	1				
4 Forms		4 sets											French Spanish					
	Form	Set	Form	Form	Form	Form	Form	Mixed	Form	Form	Year	Year	Set	Form	Form			
8	4	4	3	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	4	3	1				
4 Forms		4 sets											French Spanish German					

**Curriculum Rotations/Specific Setup:**

Expressive Arts is taught with Years 5 & 6 together.

Design Tech (x 2) and Food Tech rotate every term.

French and Spanish is taught for half a term in Year 7 with language pathway chosen in Spring Term in Year 7.

German is available for pupils in Year 8 to trial and then continue into Year 9.

Drama and Dance is taught for half a year.

**Senior School**

Year	English	Maths	Science	History	Geography	RS	Art & Textiles	Design and Food Technology	ICT	Music	PSHE	MFL	PE & Games	Drama	Dance
	Form	Set	Form	Form	Form	Form	Form	Mixed	Form	Form	Form	Set	Year	Form	Form
9	4	4	3	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	3	3	1	
4 Forms	4 sets	4 sets	4 sets									French Spanish German			

**Curriculum Rotations/Specific Setup:**

Art & Textiles rotate every term.

Drama and Dance is taught for half a year.

Year	English	Maths	Science	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D	PSHE	PE
	Set	Set	Set	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Year	Year
10	5	4	5 + Tutor	3	3	3	3	1	3
4 Forms	4 sets	5 sets	4 sets						

Year	English	Maths	Science	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D	PSHE	PE
	Set	Set	Set	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Year	Year
11	5	4	5 + Tutor	3	3	3	3	1	3
4 Forms	4 sets	5 sets	4 sets						

#### Y10 & 11 Option Blocks:

Year 10 Option Block A	Option Block B	Option Block C	Option Block D
RS	Computing	Textiles	Business Studies
Spanish	Food & Nutrition	German	PE GCSE
DT	History	Spanish	DT
Geography	Drama	Art	Music
Food & Nutrition	Triple Science	DT	History
French	PE GCSE	Geography	
Computing (DMC)		Business Studies	

Year 11 Option Block A	Option Block B	Option Block C	Option Block D
Business Studies	Art & Textiles	Computer Science	Business Studies
Drama	Computer Science	DT	DT
DT	German	French	Music
Geography	Geography	Food & Nutrition	PE
PE	History	History	RS
Spanish	Spanish		Science



## **Progression and Continuity**

Whilst Ballard School is not confined to the requirements of the National Curriculum per se, each subject area does broadly follow national curriculum guidelines in order to provide progression through the key stages.

In addition, and to allow for efficient progression from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3, it is Ballard School policy to use specialist subject staff where appropriate lower down the School (French, for example, is delivered by GCSE teachers from Year 1 upwards).

The School is divided into four sections: Pre-Prep (Nursery to Year 2), Lower Prep (Years 3 to 5), Upper Prep (Years 6 to 8), and Senior School (Years 9 to 11). Years 1 to 5 have Pre-Prep and Lower Prep Curriculum Co-ordinators, who have oversight of all Maths, English and the Humanities subjects. They meet regularly with the Heads of Department in the Upper Prep/Senior School for these subjects to discuss programme of studies and progression throughout School. Heads of Department for English, Maths, Science, French, Spanish, Art, DT, Music, Performing Arts and PE cover Years 3 to 11 and thus have overview of progression and expectations. In the Pre-Prep and Lower Prep, all subject coverage and content is monitored by the Heads of Section. Regular meetings with Co-ordinators who oversee Years 3-5 take place throughout the year to ensure continuity and progression.

## **Special Needs**

In terms of content and organisation the curriculum takes account of the needs of those pupils requiring special provision. Please refer to Ballard's [SEND Policy](#)

## **Potential Plus (formerly known as Gifted and Talented)**

We endeavour to meet the needs of every individual pupil, including the more able. We aim to identify pupils' strengths and to develop them through:

1. Quality First Teaching for all pupils
2. Teaching and learning strategies specific to more able pupils
3. Individualised/personalised learning

For more information, please refer to Ballard's [Potential Plus Policy](#)

## **In-House Work Experience**

Work experience is offered in house for Year 11, after the completion of the summer GCSE exams. This is a voluntary programme with the pupils opting to participate. Ballard pupils frequently source their own work experience through family contacts.

## **Co-Curricular**

Ballard has an extensive Activities and Trips Programme that supports the curriculum through an enrichment (subject specific clubs) and trips programme alongside academic support (GCSE Raising Attainment, homework support and revision sessions). Please refer to [Ballard's Co-curricular Policy](#)

## **Personal Development**

The Ballard curriculum contributes to the pupils' personal, health social and economic development (PSHE programme). Most subjects offer opportunities to explore issues which impact on the personal growth development of pupils and promotion of British Values. Of prime importance at Ballard is the personal

contact between pupils and Form Tutors. Form Tutor time and scheduled PSHE lessons are seen as an ideal time to promote personal, social, health and economic education. To supplement this, a progressive PSHE programme is delivered to whole year groups by a dedicated team of PSHE staff. Please see PSHE programmes of study. The implementation of enhanced study skills is also seen as an important component of the programme when it comes to personal development. Revision skills at Year 11 will be a focus shared by all subject teachers using, and explored further, in PSHE and in lesson time throughout the year at specific times before key exams using Effective Revision guidance. Please refer to Ballard's [PSHE and RSE Policy](#)

### **Careers Information, Advice and Guidance**

Ballard pupils in the Senior School are introduced to a programme of careers commencing at Year 7, co-ordinated by the Head of Careers. This programme includes the use of web-based information, available through Teams, that is helpful in matching pupils' abilities and interests with appropriate careers advice and option choices for GCSE and for continuing education beyond Ballard. Opportunities to discuss related topics are made available within the PSHE programme and through Form Time. Please Refer to Ballard's [CEIAG Policy](#)

Matthew Higgins  
Deputy Head (Academic)  
September 2023

### **Policy Log**

Creation Date	Version	Author	Next Review
September 2021	1	Matthew Higgins	September 2022
	2	Matthew Higgins	September 2023
	3	Matthew Higgins	September 2024

## **APPENDIX 1**

Ballard Curriculum contribution to the seven areas of experience.

### **1. Linguistic and Cultural**

At Ballard School we aim to develop the ability of pupils to communicate effectively, thus increasing their command of language through listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These aims apply essentially to the teaching of English. However, they also apply to the teaching of other languages at Ballard. French is taught from Year 1 and in Year 4 and then in Year 5, pupils study Spanish as a second foreign language, alongside French. Language study is compulsory up to the end of Year 9, however, some SEND pupils may be disapplied from a language so that they can access additional literacy and numeracy support.

### **2. Mathematical**

As a core subject, Mathematics is taught throughout the Junior and Senior schools. Ballard School aims to develop a knowledge and understanding of mathematical principles using a variety of teaching methods including practical activities, exploration, and discussion. It is our aim to build a confidence and love of numbers with our pupils. There are many opportunities for cross curricular Mathematical learning, including Science and Geography lessons where core skills are reinforced.

Topics are first introduced at a simple level and are revisited at intervals extending previous knowledge. Lesson by lesson our pupils' understanding of the subject is both reinforced and enlarged. The more able pupil is constantly stimulated by more challenging questions which require them to transfer their skills between topics and apply their knowledge. Those pupils who require a little extra time and consolidation benefit from regular reinforcement allowing them to develop confidence through success.

Pupils at Ballard School are given the opportunity to follow Further Maths and Additional Maths as well as IGCSE Mathematics in Year 11. Our most able pupils also take part in local and national competitions such as the prestigious UK Maths Challenge provided by the United Kingdom Mathematics Trust.

### **3. Scientific**

Science is also a core subject throughout the School, and the curriculum aims to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of nature, materials, and forces. It aims also to develop those skills associated with science as a process of enquiry; for example, by observing, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments, and recording findings.

Study at KS3 is designed to develop the child's scientific maturity, focussing on engaging in scientific principles and understanding how they relate to the world in which we live. Important foundations are laid from which to embark upon the GCSE courses through the AQA 'Activate' course.

The GCSE course starts during Year 9. At GCSE pupils of high intellectual ability are encouraged to study towards three GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. They are allocated eight periods (plus one tutor period) a week to follow this course, three periods coming from the Option Blocks. They sit all their exams at the end of a 3-year course in Year 11. The remainder of the Year group follow a 3-year 'Combined Science Trilogy' course (five periods a week plus one tutor period) culminating in exams at the end of Year 11. The different opportunities at GCSE are designed to best suit pupils' abilities and career choices.

### **4. Technology**

Ballard School's technology curriculum is centred on Computer Science, Design Technology and Food Preparation and Nutrition, all of which are taught at GCSE level. STEM activities feature developing 'real world' experiences and problem-solving abilities.

Pupils of all ages are taught how to use information and communication technology safely and develop problem-solving skills. These skills are refined through practice across a wide range of subjects.

## **Computer Science**

IT skills are developed from an early age with a dedicated lesson in Key Stage 2 and 3. Pupils can choose Computer Science GCSE or a general skills course (via the study lessons) at Key Stage 4.

Problem-solving and thinking skills are developed as a key part of the courses throughout the School, and good IT habits are taught; from file management and internet safety to use of all the key Office applications.

## **Design Technology (DT)**

Design Technology enables pupils to develop their design talents and problem-solving skills. They have the opportunity to work with tools, equipment, materials, and components to produce individual products reflecting their interests and personalities. Pupils use the iterative design process to devise innovative solutions to contexts and briefs, many of which are often open-ended. Design sketching, modelling, prototyping, and testing are often used by pupils to help develop meaningful solutions. Pupils also study and evaluate the way in which designers and consumers interact with products and the world around us. ICT is incorporated into the teaching of both Design Technology and Food Preparation and Nutrition at various stages in the project process. In Design Technology this is in the form of computer aided design and manufacturing using CAD/CAM.

A new 'Outward Facing' GCSE curriculum has been designed to highlight commercial aspects of the subject. This course has been further developed and pupils now study AQA Art and Design – 3-Dimensional Product Design with many pupils excelling in their portfolio and examination assessments.

**STEM** - Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths Activities; the DT department has a strong and successful history of participating in major design and building projects within timetabled lessons and co-curricular activities.

## **Food Preparation and Nutrition**

Food Preparation and Nutrition enables pupils to develop their creative, organisation and analytical skills and talents. They have an opportunity to learn a variety of different skills and techniques to produce delicious dishes.

Food Preparation and Nutrition teaches pupils about the composition of food, why we need it, the choices people make and how it affects our long-term health. Pupils will understand how food can be prepared and cooked skilfully and safely to produce delicious and nutritious meals, including foods from different cultures, and how consumers can be informed and thoughtful.

The department works with the Science and Maths departments to stimulate and co-ordinate STEM projects and activities and has links with the British Science Association and Crest Awards Scheme, with pupils gaining a number of Bronze and Silver Awards.

## **5. Human and Social**

Through the teaching principally of Geography, History, Business Studies, and Religious Studies Ballard pupils focus on people and their environment, and look at how human action has influenced, and can influence, events and conditions. These subjects are taught throughout the School, and to GCSE level. Business Studies is taught as a GCSE option.

In KS3 Geography the basic building blocks for the GCSE course are laid. The topics of weather, population, settlement, rivers, plate tectonics, resource management, development and ecosystems are taught using as much hands-on everyday experience as possible. At KS4 the pupils follow AQA's GCSE Geography where the course is split into Physical and Human Geography. Fieldwork is carried out focussing on contrasting land use zones in Southampton and coastal management at Milford on Sea.

## **6. Physical**

PE and Sport at Ballard aims to develop pupils' physical abilities and enjoyment in a safe and supportive environment. Promoting play and self-discovery that leads to lifelong passions within sport and exercise.

The Physical Education curriculum is initially designed to develop the fundamental movement, motor skills and strength required for success and enjoyment in all sports and includes Dance, Gymnastics, co-ordination games, Athletics and Swimming. As pupils progress through the school sports such as Basketball, Swimming, Handball, Volleyball and Badminton are introduced to ensure all pupils have a wide and varied experience in Physical Education.

The Games Programme then focuses on competitive team sports with fixtures against other schools in Football, Rugby, Hockey, Netball, Rounders, Tennis, Swimming, Athletics and Cricket. Team practice sessions are held regularly to develop an enhanced tactical and technical understanding of the sport. This enables us to help develop teamwork, problem-solving skills and respect for fellow athletes and officials. Participation outside of School is actively encouraged to enhance pupil enjoyment and further help their quest for excellence.

We are fortunate to have excellent facilities and many specialist PE staff who provide excellent Sporting opportunities for all pupils throughout the stages of education here at Ballard.

## **7. Aesthetic and Creative**

The majority of subjects taught at Ballard School can contribute to the aesthetic and creative talents within the individual. However, through the teaching of Art, Music, Dance, Expressive Arts (Years 3 to 5), Drama and English Literature, and a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities including productions, trips and workshops, Ballard pupils enjoy particularly enriching aesthetic and creative opportunities.

Curriculum lessons are delivered by specialist staff in these subjects at all stages of the School. Art and Music are weekly timetabled lessons throughout the school up to Year 9. Dance is delivered through the PE and Expressive Arts curriculum and Drama through Expressive Arts and English up to Year 8. At Year 9, all pupils may opt to partake in a 'Carousel' of these subjects enabling them to make a confident start to their chosen GCSE subjects without sacrificing their broader artistic education. Uptake at GCSE level in Creative subjects is excellent. Pre-Prep pupils also benefit from specialist Music, Dance and Expressive Arts lessons.

Our curriculum provision ensures that all pupils can experience the benefits of a wide range of aesthetic and creative opportunities including workshops, visiting artists, productions and concerts, and trips to galleries and shows.

## **8. Religious Education**

Christian values play a key part at Ballard and the Religious Studies and PSHE programmes of study provide pupils a greater understanding of other faiths. Ballard is committed to the undertaking of charitable work and celebration of key Christian events throughout the year. Further details of activities linked to Religious Education and Charity can be found in Ballard's Co-curricular Policy.