



## Curriculum Policy

### Vision Statement

**Ballard School provides a supportive and caring environment for learning, based on Christian values and good 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 an ethos of concern for others, unselfish attitudes 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.
- To provide a suitable and effective learning environment for those pupils requiring special provision, including very able 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 extra-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 at all 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

### **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 Latin is taught in Year 5 and 6. In Year 7 students choose to study either German or Spanish as a second foreign language, alongside French. Pupils struggling with a second foreign language have the option to take additional numeracy and literacy. Language study is compulsory up to the end of Year 9. 44 of Year 11 leavers studied at least one MFL in 2017, with some students having studied two or three.

Between 2013 and 2015, we took part in the Comenius Multilateral School Partnerships Programme with partner schools in Germany, Spain and Italy. Through the Comenius funding we were able to send students and teachers to all three countries. In total, over 20 students benefitted from a cultural visit abroad, with many more being involved in the project work in school.

We have in the past enjoyed a relationship with a trendsetting Chinese school in Shanghai ... Soong Ching Ling School, which has already led to one pupil 'exchange' and two visits to China for Ballard staff. In addition, we have established a link with South Korea, and had a pupil on our roll for a year and a half before she had to return to Seoul. Last summer saw two groups of Chinese students visit Ballard for a week, and we aim to explore further how best we can build on the relationships we have built up. Currently Ballard School has a Home Office allocation of 5 study visas (for overseas students from outside the EU) under its Tier 4 sponsorship scheme. Our French, German and Spanish annual exchange trips are well established and every year we have a number of international trips. Past destinations have included China, India, Venice, northern France, Jersey, New York, Utah, Canada, Kenya, Morocco to name but a few. We are delighted to have achieved the International School Award in September 2015. This award provides recognition for teachers and their schools working to instil a global dimension into the learning experience of all children and young people.

Ballard pupils are embracing opportunities to travel but also to welcome visitors from overseas to school. We have a well-established link with a Swiss School and offer annual work experience to several of their teaching students. Previous academic years saw us host a group of Ukrainian singers and dancers, as well as Japanese visitors who introduce our younger pupils to their culture, language and community.

### **Mathematical**

As a core subject Mathematics is taught throughout the Junior and Senior schools. It is a compulsory subject at GCSE. 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 foster within our pupils an enjoyment of Maths.

Topics are first introduced at a simple level and are revisited at intervals extending previous knowledge. Lesson by lesson our pupils' grasp of the subject is both reinforced and enlarged. The more able pupil is constantly stimulated by more challenging examples while the weaker pupil benefits from regular reinforcement and is enabled to develop confidence through success.

Students at Ballard School are given the opportunity to follow Functional Mathematics and GCSE Statistics as well as GCSE Mathematics. 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.

### **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 he or she lives. Important foundations are laid from which to embark upon the GCSE courses through the AQA 'Activate' course (Yr. 7 - 8). Pupils in Year 6 follow the exciting Science Bugs course and complete a 'CREST Discovery' project. In Year 9 a CREST Bronze award is attempted.

The GCSE course starts during Year 9. At GCSE pupils of high intellectual ability are encouraged to study towards three GCSE in Biology, Chemistry & Physics. They are allocated 8 periods a week to follow this course, 3 periods coming from the Option Blocks. They sit all their exams at the end of a three year course in Year 11. The remainder of the Year group follow a 3 year 'Combined Science Trilogy' course (5 periods a week) culminating in exams at the end of year 11. The different opportunities at GCSE are designed to best suit pupils' abilities and career choices.

### **Technology**

Ballard School's technology curriculum is centred on Computer Science, Design Technology and Food Technology (Home Economics), all of which are taught at GCSE level.

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. (See School Development Plan).

### **Design Technology (DT)**

Design Technology enables students 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. Students 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 students to help develop meaningful solutions. Students 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 Technology at various stages in the project process. In Design Technology this is in the form of computer aided design and manufacturing, CAD/CAM.

A new 'Outward Facing' GCSE curriculum has been designed by working with a Product Design Principle Examiner to highlight business and commercial aspects of the subject.

### **Food Technology**

Food Technology enables students 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** is the new GCSE and will teach students of the composition of food, why we need it, the choices people make and how it affects our long-term health. Students 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. Throughout the school year students enjoy a range of cooking opportunities these include after-school activities, competitions and summer camps.

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 time tabled lessons and in particular extra-curricular activities. Pupils keenly participate in the STEM Club and activities, having represented the South East and South West Areas at numerous UK Big Bang Science and Technology Exhibitions. Awards gained include, Innovation, 'Special Engineering Skills' awards and UK Technology Club of the Year Runner Up. Participation in these activities brings the stimulation of modern technology and problem solving into the classroom creating tangible excitement and buzz for both pupils and staff.

The Department works with the Science and maths department to stimulate and coordinate 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.

Watersports and the Marine industry are particularly important aspects of the South Coast region. Pupils have the opportunity to study Marine technology through the construction of a 6 metre Bayraider sailing boat being built at school and sponsored by a number of marine companies. Pupils also benefit through our relationship with Brockenhurst College via the Hengistbury Outdoors Education Centre. The centre provides an ideal base for sailing and paddle sports. These activities are designed to promote confidence and self-reliance through the development of practical skills and abilities, teamwork and individual responsibility.

### **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.

We are also committed to fundraising for various charity and this is embedded within the programme of activities for the 4 houses: each house selects a charity to raise funds for the academic year. The charities generally are linked to staff, parents or pupils and the houses select from a list provided. The school has attempted to use local charities and they are invited to the school to meet the house members and present to them. There are several home clothes days and events throughout the year that gives the houses the opportunity to raise money for their charities. The House Captains also lead the 'Apprentice' competition. Pupils lead the project and raise money for their charity. There are two house awards given at the end of the year relating to the most money raised for the house charities and the most money during the Apprentice event. Past school based charities include Ray of Hope (Kenya), Good News Children's Home (Kenya), Children of Chernobyl, Bethany kids (Kenya), Water Aid and Piam Brown Unit (Children's oncology and haematology centre in Southampton, Samaritan's Purse (Christmas show boxes), the Basics' Bank and the Poppy Appeal. The houses have supported

Doctors Without Borders, Unicef, WWF, Save the Children, MacMillan Cancer, War Child, Starlight, Diabetes UK, Oakhaven Hospice, Julia's House, Lyminster Lifeboat and Marie Curie Cancer. Last year the houses have chosen local charities which are Teenage Cancer Trust, Solent Mind, Forza Strength Against Cancer, and Hampshire and IoW Air Ambulance.

## **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, Coordination games, Athletics and Swimming. As pupils progress through the school sports such as Water Polo, Basketball, 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. Allowing us to help develop team work, 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 that provide excellent Sporting opportunities for all pupils throughout the stages of Education here at Ballard.

## **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 Y9. Dance is delivered through the PE and Expressive Arts curriculum and Drama through Expressive Arts and English up to Year 8. At Y9, all pupils 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 are able to 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.

Our curriculum provision is greatly enhanced by an extensive extra-curricular programme of activities, productions and music ensembles available to every year group. These give opportunities to pupils of all ages to get involved in Music, Drama and Dance performances. For those not wishing to be in the spotlight, there are extensive backstage, Front of House and technical teams or to be involved with. Annual events at which Ballard pupils take a leading role include the Carol Service, Harvest

Festival, Remembrance Day, and a comprehensive programme of annual Junior and Senior School concerts in addition to a range of outside festivals, concerts and competitions. School Assemblies regularly involve pupils performing. Participation in these diverse and extensive opportunities enables Ballard pupils to build confidence, creativity and practical learning skills which support their learning across the curriculum. While the emphasis is on an inclusive approach, where all pupils can benefit and feel a sense of achievement, able pupils are also stretched and challenged through advanced ensembles and groups. Pupils have opportunities to gain accreditation through ABRSM, Rockschoool, New Era, English Speaking Board, LAMDA exams and the Trinity Guildhall Arts Award.

We are in the process of expanding our provision of the Arts Award. Currently on offer to dancers in Year 9, we aim to extend the provision of the award to a larger cohort of pupils and at more stages in the school.

A performance pattern has been established with a Senior Musical every two years, alternating with a Senior Drama production (in addition to the GCSE Drama production). A whole school Dance production is also every two years. In addition, a Ballard year would include an Upper Prep drama, a Lower Prep Musical and Pre Prep Musical. There are numerous concerts throughout the year and weekly lunchtime recitals. Alumni, and, indeed, parents and ex parents, are playing an increasingly prominent part in the Performing Arts side of Ballard, enjoying being part of the choir and band. Traditions are maintained, for example the Pre Prep nativity, the Harvest festival and the Carol Service at the local Priory. These are always important dates in the Ballard calendar

Further enrichment is offered through the regular provision of theatre and cultural trips to major arts venues, ranging from day trips to art galleries and music events to residential trips. Day trips aim to maximise our proximity to the wealth of local Arts venues including Russell Coates Gallery, Mayflower Theatre and Poole Lighthouse. Having London within easy reach enables us to give pupils the chance to participate in and see West End workshops and shows (The Lion King and Aladdin in 16/17). Trips further afield include the senior Performing Arts trip to New York and our European Music Tours (Vienna: July 2014 and Barcelona: July 2017).

Our emphasis on the importance of a strong aesthetic and creative provision extends to our local community. We like to share our enthusiasm and expertise with local state schools, regularly hosting Performing Arts workshops and matinee performances. We are heavily involved in local charities and support them by performing at Carol Services and other charity events. We have close links with Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and Chorus which have enabled our choristers to perform with them at prestigious venues. We hold an annual community Christmas Concert for residents of local care homes. Our Performing Arts Centre is used by a number of local community groups.

In recognition of Ballard School's strength in relation to the aesthetic and creative, the school was awarded in July 2013 the prestigious Artsmark Gold accreditation. This national award runs for a period of three years and reflects the quality and range of dramatic, artistic, musical, and dance opportunities provided to Ballard pupils. We are now in the process of applying for the upgraded Artsmark Platinum accreditation, and are confident we have everything in place regarding meeting the criteria required.

### **Personal Development**

The Ballard curriculum also contributes to the pupils' personal, social and health development. Most subjects offer opportunities to explore issues that impact on the personal growth and development of pupils. Of prime importance at Ballard is the personal contact between pupils and Form Tutors. Form Tutor time is seen as an ideal time to promote personal, social and health education. To supplement this, however, a programme of PSHE is delivered to whole year groups by specialist staff.

Mr Andrew Marshall coordinates a progressive PSHE programme and works alongside a dedicated team of PSHE staff. Please See PSHE programmes of study. This programme of study is seen as vital, and is designed to tackle those important issues that confront pupils during their teenage years; such as drugs, alcohol, friendships and relationships. 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 and explored further in PSHE.

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

Ballard pupils in the Senior School are introduced to a programme of careers commencing at Year 7, coordinated by the Head of Careers. This programme includes the use of web-based information, available through the VLE, that is helpful in matching pupils' abilities / 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 the Tutor Group.

In Year 10, pupils are offered the opportunity to take part in psychometric profiling which culminates in a personal report being compiled and an individual interview with a career's adviser. This process highlights strengths and recommendations are made with regard to possible career paths and higher educational choices.

A link has been established with a local maintained school and the two schools share a series of evening careers orientated lectures scheduled throughout the Easter term.

Through a link with the local Rotary Club Ballard pupils at Year 11 receive 'mock' 6th form interviews. The Rotarians provide pupils with constructive feedback regarding how they come across at interview and how they could improve their personal statements. The School supports pupils in Year 11 with their ongoing educational plans.

The Rotarians are also involved with Ballard pupils in the summer term of Year 9 with the Ballard Challenge. This Challenge lasts one week and involves a day with the Royal Marines followed by a carousel of life skills activities; for example: personal finance, first aid, nutrition, interview techniques, etiquette and personal hygiene. In addition all pupils are tasked with making an individual presentation on a subject of their choice. The presentations are judged by the Rotary Club, and constructive feedback is given. The aim here is to encourage, nurture and support the whole school ethos of creating an independent learner.

### **Organisation of the curriculum**

The curriculum is organised so that teaching groups are small in number. It is our aim to keep the maximum class size below 20, with the exception of PE. In the Junior School the average size of each teaching group is more likely to be 16. In the Senior School we also aim for a maximum class size of 20, again with the average class size being more often than not 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 attainment)
- Streams : lower and higher (named Y and X)
- Bands
- GCSE years only: Option blocks (mixed ability or sets depending on numbers)

### **Criteria for Streaming**

The school sometimes operates a streaming system in a selection of year groups. The decision to stream is reviewed every year for each year group. This decision 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 takes into account the end of year attainment in formal examinations, the overall 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 more gentle pace or a more challenging approach to academics
- Social needs; where a pupil is known to work particularly well within a specific group of individuals

### **Criteria for Banding**

The English department has introduced a banding system in UP and SS as from September 2015. Year groups are split into 2 bands with 1 or 2 teaching groups of similar ability in each band. As per streaming, each child is looked at individually, baseline assessment data and teachers' feedback taken into account before allocating children to different group. Children of higher ability are placed in the upper band.

### **Teaching week**

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

**Pre Prep:** 5 days, 5hrs 50min teaching per day

**Lower and Upper Prep School:** 5 days, 4 x 50 min lessons in the morning, and 2 x 50 min lessons in the afternoon. We can now offer double lessons and thus provide more opportunities to place drama in the curriculum, and for pupils to have more time with the more creative subjects

**Senior School:** 5 days, 4 x 50 min lessons in the morning and 2 x 50 min lessons in the afternoon. We can now offer double lessons and thus give more time to the option block subjects, where contact time had been somewhat reduced over the years

### **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 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 3 upwards).

The school is divided into four sections: Pre-Prep, Lower Prep (Y3-5), Upper Prep (Y6-8), Senior school (Y9-11). Heads of Department in the Junior and Senior Schools liaise with department colleagues to ensure continuity between the key stages. Our Heads of Department for English cover Y3-5 and Y6-11. Years 1-5 have Pre-Prep and Lower Prep Curriculum Coordinators, who have oversight of all

Humanity subjects. They meet regularly with the Senior Heads of Department for this subject to discuss programme of studies and progression throughout school. Heads of Department for Maths, Science, MFL, Art, DT, Music and PE cover Y3-11 and thus have overview of progression and expectations. In Pre-Prep, all subject coverage and content is monitored by the Pre-Prep Curriculum Coordinator and Head of Pre-Prep. Regular meetings with coordinators 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 Special Needs 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 the Potential Plus Policy.**

### **Work Experience**

Work experience is offered in Year 11, after the completion of the summer GCSE exams. This is a voluntary programme with the pupils opting to get involved. There are three routes that can be followed:

- Ballard has established links with Solent Educational Business Partnership, who offer work experience in the Solent/New Forest area
- The School is building a database of local businesses who offer work experience to Ballard Students
- In addition, Ballard students frequently source their own work experience through family contacts.