



Brentwood School

PREPARATORY

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

This policy is applicable to all Preparatory pupils including those in the EYFS.

Introduction

At Brentwood Preparatory School we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; it should be fun. Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives. We are committed to educating the 'whole person' and embrace a holistic approach to nurturing and supporting each individual child.

Aims and objectives

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

- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- foster children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people;
- develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- show respect for all cultures and, in so doing, promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community;
- help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.
- encourage an awareness of a spiritual dimension;
- foster a healthier lifestyle.

Effective learning

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways (e.g. visual, kinaesthetic, aural etc) and we recognize the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them. We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:

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

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn. We also encourage peer assessment with pupils taking an active role in providing constructive advice for further improvement. This is achieved by sharing with pupils the learning intentions and success criteria for reaching these objectives. We promote a growth mindset approach (pioneered by Dr Carol Dweck) where pupils use their mistakes to help them improve. They are encouraged to focus on the next steps for learning, rather than just focusing on a grade or rank order. All pupils in the Preparatory school are involved in setting personal targets, which by KS2 is included on their half-yearly report.

Effective teaching

Teaching at Brentwood Preparatory School motivates and inspires the children, whilst building on their existing skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. We use the school curriculum plans to guide our teaching. This sets out the aims, objectives and values of the school and details what is to be taught to each year group. The School, as a high quality independent school, has exercised its right to opt-out from the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The Nursery and Reception Years continue to use the best aspects of the EYFS but the School has the flexibility to use its own assessment criteria.

We base our teaching on our knowledge of the children's current levels of attainment. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge, skills and understanding of the children. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning work for children with special educational needs, we give due regard to information and targets provided by the learning support teachers. This includes those pupils who may be able or talented, or who have English as an additional language. We have high expectations of all children at Brentwood Preparatory School, and encourage them to achieve work of the highest possible standard.

We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives and success criteria. Our lesson plans contain information about the tasks to be set, the resources needed, and the way we assess the children's work (see curriculum policy). We evaluate all lessons so that we can modify and improve our teaching in the future.

Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all children in the class. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to rewards and discipline. We expect all children to comply with the school and classroom rules that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise children for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. The rewards system is popular and highly effective in praising and motivating pupils. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When children misbehave we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our school behaviour and discipline policy.

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we first inform parents and obtain their permission, and carry out thorough risk assessments.

Our classrooms are attractive and dynamic learning environments. We change displays regularly, to ensure that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children.

Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice. (Refer to appraisal documentation). Non-contact time is given so that teachers have time to plan, prepare and assess lessons as well as to observe others teach, thereby sharing good practice.

We conduct all of our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all. We celebrate difference and promote equality, regardless of age, sexuality, gender, disability or faith. Similarly, throughout

the curriculum we implicitly and explicitly promote fundamental British values such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The role of parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping their children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- sending regular reports to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further;
- writing a summary of work to be covered and making this available for all parents digitally
- holding parents' meetings to discuss a child's progress and, if necessary, explain how parents can support their child with their homework and attendance;
- making ourselves available to speak with parents. Parents and teachers often meet at the start or end of a school day to discuss a child's progress;
- ensuring that parents feel that teachers are approachable and communication with the school is effective;
- issuing a fortnightly newsletter for parents which also appears on our website;
- issuing a Parents' Handbook – a guide to help each parent understand and appreciate the teaching, learning and administrative routines in the school.
- Providing seminars on such matters as internet safety to help their child at home.

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

- ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit;
- do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school;
- promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general.
- contact form tutors/subject teachers if they have any concerns or issues concerning their child's progress or welfare at school.

The expectations of pupils

We expect pupils to:

- have the highest expectations of themselves in all aspects of school life;
- commit themselves to maintaining a positive work ethic (including a growth mindset approach) and good behaviour
- ensure they are punctual and well prepared for lessons;
- meet the demands of quality homework and independent study whilst ensuring deadlines are met;
- complete work missed due to absence, as appropriate;
- revise effectively for tests and examinations;
- work effectively by themselves, in paired or in group work in order to achieve their targets;
- be responsive in lessons and activities including a commitment to answering questions orally;
- seek assistance when necessary;
- attend support sessions and commit to co-curricular activities.