

Curriculum Policy

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This policy is applicable to all pupils including those in EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage).

CURRICULUM POLICY

2023-2024

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the curriculum at Danes Hill School continues to maintain, and is renowned for, its breadth and excellence. The school has a long-established history of giving pupils a broad curriculum that goes beyond the basics, stretches the individual academically and holistically, and equips them for an ever-changing world.

Strive for excellence

Through personalised learning, the school fosters the attributes of curiosity, enquiry and problem-solving in all. The aim is to instil in each pupil the perseverance, determination, grit and commitment that will make them successful at any endeavour. A nurturing culture is actively promoted that safely allows each child to take risks and to try new activities and skills. Excellence begins with adopting a growth mindset which equips children with the confidence that enables them to believe that they can learn and have the self-assurance to solve problems and overcome difficulties. Children are inspired and engaged, so they develop a desire to learn that is born out of the magic of discovery. Learning must be relevant so that children see a reason for new skills and knowledge and can celebrate the feeling of achievement gained from the new doors they can open and be proud of a job well done.

This document seeks to place academic issues into a whole-school context so that staff, parents, governors, and other interested parties may more fully understand the way in which the school's approaches towards teaching and learning, are managed, reviewed, and developed. This policy is applicable to all pupils including those in EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage).

The position of the school in the national Preparatory School context

Danes Hill achieves excellent results in 11+, Common Entrance and Public-School examinations, together with a variety of nationally recognised tests and examinations. That said, the fact that the school is unselective, (most children starting at the age of 3 or 4, although later entrants do sit tests in English and Maths as required – see Admissions Policy) means there is a wide ability range within each year group. Teaching and learning arrangements underpin two key principles:

- That all pupils reach their potential in academic, physical, spiritual, emotional, creative, technical, and aesthetic realms.
- That the school stands for academic excellence. This means that *results do matter*, but these results should reflect breadth and opportunity across the curriculum.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Danes Hill seeks to provide a broad and balanced education for all children between the ages of 3 and 13. This curriculum seeks to develop the intellectual, social, physical,

moral/spiritual, linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, physical, aesthetic and creative awareness of each pupil by the promotion of a wide range of appropriate opportunities across each curriculum area. This broad range of opportunities should enable a child to develop and acquire appropriate skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy at a level commensurate with national standards and in many cases well beyond.

- Ensure that the personal, social, health and economic education reflects the aims and ethos of the school, and encourages respect and tolerance for others, paying regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act (2010).
- In common with many independent Preparatory Schools, Danes Hill implements a modified National Curriculum academic programme across the Pre-Prep and the Junior and Upper Schools. Some statutory assessments may be used, where appropriate. Danes Hill does, however, aim to provide an appropriate education for all pupils considering their age and ability and employing several methods to achieve this, including streaming, setting and specialist individual support as required by an EHC Plan or appropriate internal or external assessment. All children with an EHC Plan, have a Learning Support Assistant assigned to them. The LSA supports the child individually in the classroom during lessons, as well as adapting learning resources to enable the children to access the curriculum. This includes supporting disabled children across the school campus throughout the day and enlarging learning resources for partially sighted children.
- Ensure that all children develop the skills they need to become confident, self-motivated learners, who can engage with and solve challenges innovatively so that they become independent, responsible, valuable, and confident members of the community.
- Develop in every young person British values, skills and behaviours they need to get on in life through a rich provision of classroom and extra-curricular activities that develop a range of character attributes.
- Support and promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- The Foundation Stage Curriculum is organised into three prime and four specific areas of learning. The EYFS profile sums up and describes each child's development and learning achievements at the end of their Reception Year. It is based on ongoing observation and assessment in the three prime and four specific areas of learning and development.

The three prime areas are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The four specific areas through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive arts and design

See EYFS Policy

- The school seeks to give significant curriculum time to non-core National Curriculum subjects that include a general humanities course in the Pre-Prep and Years 2 and 3, encompassing History, Geography and Religious Studies. All Danes Hill pupils follow courses

in Art, Design and Technology (including Food Technology from Year 4), Drama, Music, ICT, Physical Education, Swimming and Games. PD; including RSE (See RSE Policy).

- Citizenship, which forms part of PD (Personal Development) is taught to all pupils in Years 6, 7 and 8 and elements of it are included from Year 2 as appropriate. Citizenship education at Danes Hill is:
 - active: emphasises learning by doing;
 - interactive: uses discussion and debate;
 - relevant: focuses on real-life issues facing young people and society;
 - critical: encourages young people to think for themselves;
 - collaborative: employs group work and co-operative learning;
 - participative: gives young people a say in their own learning.

Citizenship education involves a wide range of different elements of learning, including:

- knowledge and understanding: e.g., about topics such as Britishness, laws and rules, the democratic process, the media, human rights, diversity, money and the economy, sustainable development, and world as a global community; and about concepts, such as democracy, justice, equality, freedom, authority, and the rule of law;
- skills and aptitudes: e.g., critical thinking, analysing information, expressing opinions, taking part in discussions and debates, negotiating, conflict resolution and participating in community action;
- Fundamental British Values: e.g., respect for justice, democracy and the rule of law, openness, tolerance, courage to defend a point of view, and a willingness to listen to, work with and stand up for others. See SMSC section.
- From Year 5 and until the end of the first term of Year 6, a significant amount of effort is made to prepare the pupils for the various pre-tests for senior school entry.
- The school seeks to provide additional curriculum opportunities for its pupils with the study of classics and modern languages. French and Spanish are taught throughout the school and Classical Civilisation in Year 6. Children in Years 7 and 8 have the option of choosing any two of the three languages. Other linguistic provision can be made as required, for example, Mandarin and Greek.
- Curriculum time recognises the need for each pupil to have the opportunity to learn and make progress at a level suited to them and to achieve the necessary level required to reach the school of their (guided) choice. In addition, the curriculum encompasses a comprehensive programme of social and cultural visits and internal and external speakers that prepare the children for both their senior school and indeed their life beyond the confines of traditional education. It is also recognised that extra-curricular activities of all types have a significant role to play in a child's education.
- The school seeks to modify its overall curriculum in the light of each pupil's age, ability and aptitude in English, Maths and Science and other areas. It is accepted that considerable differentiation should be practised at each stage in the educational process so that the curriculum meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs including more able and talented children (see relevant policies), pupils with specific learning difficulties and behavioural and/or emotional needs.
- The curriculum seeks to provide equal opportunity of access to the curriculum for children, bearing in mind the different physical and emotional stages of pupils.

The Curriculum Policy aims for appropriate breadth and balance but equally, for a well-rounded, distinctive education, which promotes opportunity, self-worth, and confidence. The curriculum is under constant review and change is actively promoted.

TEACHING AND LEARNING AT DANES HILL

A learning school is more effective than a teaching school. All schools teach but not all schools teach children to learn. Danes Hill aims to create the best ethos and climate for learning, to raise the self-esteem and standing of each child and to provide a full range of activities to allow children to succeed in their own way.

The policy acts as an umbrella to all facets of teaching and learning at Danes Hill, while detailed policies are available under the various headings in the appendices and other document areas. Active learning should involve multi-sensory dimensions across the curriculum. As children learn using a variety of techniques, the school's role is to provide them with as many opportunities as possible to experience assorted styles of learning.

In the Upper School, focus is also put on study skills to help the pupils learn how to revise and maximise their learning preferences.

PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

The programmes of study at the school are based initially on National Curriculum principles where appropriate, although by Years 6, 7 and 8, the attainment of many Danes Hill pupils is at a higher level than expected for children of that age – a factor explained by the examination demands of Common Entrance and Public-School Scholarship, teacher pupil ratios and supportive parents. Heads of Department oversee the continuity and progression across Key Stages Two and Three, and there is considerable discussion between subject co-ordinators in the Pre-Prep and Heads of Department to achieve similar objectives between Key Stage One and Two (for example teaching groups in Year 2 Maths and English is informed by assessments carried out by Year 1 teachers in the summer term).

Whilst not accepting that each programme of study should adopt the same layout, the strands are similar.

- Objectives
- Content – knowledge, skills and understanding
- Resources – practical's, activities, supporting materials
- ICT – the use of ICT within subject delivery
- Assessment – monitoring pupil progress
- Homework – to support and develop knowledge and understanding.
- Reference to our aim to 'educate the whole child' and activities that support British values

SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Personal Development (PD) curriculum and assemblies are instrumental in helping pupils understand the school's aims and ethos in respect of SMSC, and strongly encourages respect for others (Appendix 1 – Bevendean Spiritual and Moral Well-Being Policy). Across the curriculum and

through opportunities afforded to Danes Hill pupils, we seek to actively support our pupils' development in these aspects:

- Spiritually: Explore beliefs and experience; respect faiths, feelings and values; enjoy learning about oneself, others and the surrounding world; use imagination and creativity; reflect. E.g., Y6's 'Discover You' workshops, RS lessons, circle time, visits to places of worship, assemblies.
- Morally: Recognise right and wrong; respect the law; understand consequences; investigate moral and ethical issues; offer reasoned views. E.g. classroom and whole school rules (Golden Rules in the younger years), talking through why a punishment is given when a rule is broken, talks by community police officers, the Eco Committee, Y8 prefect duties.
- Socially: Use a range of social skills; participate in the local community; appreciate diverse viewpoints; participate, volunteer and cooperate; resolve conflict; engage with the 'British values' of democracy, the rule of law, liberty, respect and tolerance. E.g., through School Council, debating issues in class, Charities Committee, Year 7's study of Magna Carta, the mock General Election, BHM.
- Culturally: Appreciate cultural influences; appreciate the role of Britain's parliamentary system; participate in culture opportunities; understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity. E.g., visit Parliament, celebrate themed days e.g., Y4's Chinese Day, international lunches.

Throughout the school, but more commonly in the Upper School, pupils are encouraged to think about the future career paths they may wish follow. This is also touched on by outside speakers who come from a range of professions which are subsequently discussed with pupils as they prepare to move on to their senior schools. In this way pupils are effectively prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of life in British society.

GROUPS FOR LEARNING

Danes Hill aims to provide a broad and inclusive curriculum, offering as much opportunity as possible for the children to experience different subjects and meet with success. To allow each pupil to access the curriculum provided by Danes Hill, the school groups the children by many means – setting, differentiation, inclusion and, where appropriate, extra tuition. This enables the children to work to the best of their ability in a group of like-minded children and to receive the appropriate level of support necessary to achieve their full potential.

As Danes Hill has children with a wide range of abilities, various forms of setting/ groups take place across Key Stages One, Two and Three. Initially in Year 2, children are grouped only in Maths and English. By Year 5 they are set in Maths, English and Science. At the end of Year 7, children are selected based on internal and standardised test results, and teacher assessment (including discussion with parents), for potential scholarships to senior schools. These children follow a slightly modified and accelerated curriculum to meet the requirements of scholarship level entry to the senior school of their choice. Setting takes place across Years 6 to 8 in Maths, English, Science and languages.

1. DIFFERENTIATION WITHIN THE CURRICULUM

The following section deals with the extent to which programmes of study embrace principles of differentiation and inclusion to achieve maximum pupil performance and participation.

It is a truism that all children are different. Yet equally, society expects all children to have equal access to areas of opportunity within the curriculum so that each child may achieve their potential. This is particularly true in the context of a co-educational school. All pupils can learn and make progress. At Danes Hill, differentiation still reflects the curriculum notion that 'results do matter' – for the child, home and school. We wish children to be the best that they can be. Inclusion is governed to some extent by personal choices made by pupils, whether in the realms of Modern Foreign languages, sport, or activities programmes.

Differentiation must take several factors into account:

- A child's attainment within one subject area may be obscured by specific learning needs.
- Different children react favourably to distinct styles of teaching either preferring, for example, visual stimuli or alternatively speaking and listening.
- Levels of cognitive maturation differ – and therefore children progress at quite different rates.
- A school must be prepared to challenge the more able as well as support the less able. 'Each according to their need' is a maxim which is valued and acted upon fully.

DIFFERENTIATION IN THE PRE-PREPARATORY SCHOOL

- Year 1 may, where appropriate, divide children in the classroom into groups of similar ability so that children can study at an appropriate pace within a context of co-operative learning.
- Based on diagnostic testing (see Assessment policy) pupils with evidence of specific learning needs are given appropriate support both within and outside the classroom. There are several extension and support groups for example, for reading and basic literacy and numeracy skills.
- Considerable opportunities are given to pupils to develop their talents in technology, art, music, gymnastics, dance, and other creative activities.

DIFFERENTIATION ACROSS KEY STAGES TWO AND THREE

Danes Hill operates a sophisticated system of setting across all core subjects by the beginning of Year 5. In practice, the school tries to achieve a balance between the pastoral security provided for children by a form-based system and providing appropriate teaching strategies for children, which challenge the most able and provide the weakest with support. Setting also gives the school with the opportunity to provide smaller teaching groups for many core subjects. Setting takes place as follows:

Year 2	Mathematics, English
Year 3	Mathematics, English

Year 4	Mathematics, English
Year 5	Mathematics, English, Science
Year	Mathematics, English, Science and languages
Year 7/8	Mathematics, English, Science and languages. Where possible, potential scholars will be set in top sets for all subjects.

At every stage of the setting and streaming processes, arrangements are made as flexible as possible. Scholarship entry can depend on the choice of the pupil's senior school and/or the extent to which that school has a particularly competitive entry. Considerable attention is given to the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Whilst there is no doubt that the setting system embraces their needs, individual pupils receive extensive support from the school's Learning Support Centre. The school uses evidence from Educational Psychologists' Reports to obtain amanuenses or laptop usage in important examinations in compliance with JCQ guidelines. (See LSC Policy)

N.B. Whilst setting remains central to the school's differentiation policies, staff use a plethora of methods and activities to develop further pupil response. These include:

- By OUTCOME – giving a common task to elicit diverse levels of response.
- By RATE OF PROGRESS – allowing children to work at their own pace.
- By ENRICHMENT – giving children extra tasks intended to broaden their understanding of the material.
- By SETTING DIFFERENT TASKS – such tasks would be based upon a common topic but allowing children to work at various levels.
- By UTILISING PERSONAL PUPIL PREFERENCE (e.g., competitive versus solo situation) to enhance individual and group understanding.

Differentiation is considered a crucial element in school life but is weighted with the desire to provide appropriate pupil opportunity across the curriculum. Equally, it is felt important to identify and harness pupil talents. Appropriate opportunity for talented pupils is provided in the following forms:

- Extension activities in all subjects.
- A timetabled provision and/or after school provision for talented individuals to prepare for Public School Art, DT and All-rounder awards in Years 7 and 8.
- Individual instrumental tuition and appropriate opportunity for ensemble/orchestral work (classical, jazz, pop) and regular performance opportunities for pupils of varying degrees of musical ability.
- There are choirs in the Junior School, and a Chamber Choir in the Upper School. Each performs for parents throughout the year and competes in local and national competitions, with the Chamber Choir touring abroad annually.
- Regular and extensive pupil participation in national and regional competitions across the full range of sports activities undertaken by Danes Hill pupils. These include gymnastics, swimming, athletics, and indoor rowing as well as team sports.
- Individual pupils do LAMDA exams in Speech and Drama. Extensive work is carried out by the Drama Department to provide considerable pupil opportunity to perform on stage with each year group staging a musical performance each year.

INCLUSION

Where children with a recognisable specific learning difficulty find access to the Danes Hill curriculum problematic, in whatever sense, a negotiation takes place with the child and parents to plan a way forward. Such negotiations can include appropriate individual support, extra-time in examinations or dropping a particular area of curriculum activity (e.g., a modern Language). Central to teaching and learning is the notion that all pupils can experience success in the classroom notwithstanding their individual strengths and weaknesses. Equally, each pupil should receive unambiguous feedback about ways forward for future development.

Children have considerable equality of opportunity across the curriculum in every possible degree. The school, however, enjoys a tradition of excellence in certain team sports, and fixtures take place against both single-sex and co-educational schools. Appropriate opportunities are therefore provided in games where there is increasing parity across most sports. The school provides as many opportunities as possible for children to represent the school in matches. The range of sports on offer is wide and expanding, for example, the addition of golf, shooting and wall climbing. The achievements of all are celebrated publicly within the school community.

Inclusion and differentiation are integral to lesson planning throughout the school. Danes Hill acknowledges that children learn in many ways and the school tries to develop many strategies to allow the children to do this in ways that suit them best. These forms of intelligence are considered in the provision of a variety of learning styles e.g:

- investigations
- whole class activities
- role-play
- problem solving
- group activities
- fieldwork and trips
- research
- paired activities
- creative activities
- ICT/DVD/music
- independent work
- sporting activities
- questions and answers led by the teachers
- talks and debates
- questions and answers led by the children
- presentations

In practice, therefore, children's activities are planned to challenge individuals via a whole pattern of different activities and opportunities. Pupil self-esteem is built up by a varied and enjoyable curriculum which seeks to promote identifiable success for individuals both in and out of the classroom.

It is recognised that schools with a religious ethos will want to reflect that ethos in the teaching they provide, and the current framework allows that. Article 9 of the European Convention on

Human Rights guarantees freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and religion or belief is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. However, teachers and schools must ensure their conduct recognises their responsibilities under those duties to others. Teachers are expected to respect the rights of others and to respect those with different beliefs; expressing a view in an unprofessional way that involves singling out pupils on grounds of sexuality or presenting extreme views without balance on a topic such as marriage for same sex couples, would be considered inappropriate.

MORE ABLE AND TALENTED CHILDREN

Danes Hill is committed to equal opportunities and aims to maximise the potential and achievement of each individual pupil. Through its NACE accreditation award, it seeks to establish a rigorous, systematic, and effective response to the challenge of providing for the very able. More able and talented pupils need identification and monitoring in order that the school may provide such pupils with an appropriately challenging education and opportunities, to develop their talents to ensure that their potential is translated into performance. It is recognised that such pupils may display exceptional ability and talent in some curriculum areas such as Mathematics, Music, or Art, whereas pupils whose all-round performance is well above average respond well to the rich, comprehensive, and stimulating education offered by Danes Hill School. (See More Able & Talented Policy).

1. ICT AT DANES HILL

Danes Hill has always taken positive steps to embrace and utilise ICT in teaching and learning. Tentatively, current research indicates that schools “rich in ICT” can make marked improvements in pupil attainment across the curriculum as well as preparing children for the world of study and further education and work. This two-pronged approach underlines the way in which the school is formulating its current strategies towards ICT. Cyber safety is paramount and several steps are taken to maintain it. (See ICT Policy)

It therefore follows that the school teaches ICT formally to all pupils in purpose-built ICT suites. During these lessons, children are taught ICT skills according to National Curriculum and ISEB schemes of study. These main skills include:

- Word Processing (incl. ‘Touch Typing’)
- Spreadsheets
- Data Bases
- Desk Top Publishing
- Presentations
- Control Technology
- Graphic Skills
- Internet and E-mail Skills.
- Coding

All schemes of work throughout the school are expected to integrate ICT as a tool for learning and all subjects use subject specific software or scaffolded tasks to enable children to find out information in a directed way using the internet.

New uses and applications are continually sought; for example, banks of iPads/ Surface Go's across school have been introduced into each building in the school, which staff can book out for use with classes. Introduction of one-to-one devices in some year groups has further strengthened integration of technology in the curriculum. Following online learning on MS Teams, the schools has moved its virtual learning platform to SharePoint – linked to MS Teams. This enables both the delivery and recording of work, as well as independent study for the pupils.

It is an expectation that all members of staff continuously update their ability to teach using ICT as a medium. For extended details, including resources and pupil ICT safety issues, see the ICT Policy.

2. OTHER FACTORS WHICH PROMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING AT DANES HILL

THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

- Danes Hill believes children learn most effectively in a stimulating, vibrant yet safe environment. Within the Pre-Preparatory School, most pupil activity is classroom-based with classroom arrangements facilitating both independent and co-operative learning. The curriculum allows for extensive outdoor provision. Wherever possible, dedicated rooms are used for specialised teaching, such as ICT. There is a constant drive to renew, improve and create outstanding facilities to facilitate and support the teaching and learning in the school.
- On the Prep School campus, many departments enjoy spacious specialist accommodation. Whilst Years 2, 3 and 4 children pursue most of their activity in the form base, Science, Art, DT, Music, ICT, Drama and PE take place in dedicated areas. All subjects have designated areas and rooms as bases, although not necessarily exclusive use.
- All classrooms are equipped with appropriate resources. In the Pre-Prep and Year 2, 3 and 4 classrooms, these can include class libraries, (there are also well stocked reading areas for the Junior School), specialist reference books and integrated ICT facilities. All classrooms are equipped with interactive SMART boards. Each classroom has access to ICT, including wireless internet via iPads and laptops. Purpose built ICT suites are also used.
- The children enjoy access to excellent library facilities both at the Pre-Prep and the Prep School. A fully qualified librarian keeps a detailed record of a child's leisure reading activities and are available to offer advice daily. They also offer advice to parents, run parent and child book groups, and play a key role in the promotion of reading in the school by competitions, charity readathons and author visits.
- The children have access to an outdoor learning environment, The Paddock, set in an idyllic, secure place within the school grounds. Outdoor learning is an integral part of learning at Danes Hill and is embedded in the the braos and rich curriculum on offer.

TEACHING SUPPORT

Danes Hill recognises that there is more to effective teaching and learning than the teacher alone can provide. Danes Hill deploys a variety of support staff throughout the school, who work with individual children or small groups and provide essential support for subject teachers. In particular;

- At the Pre-Prep and Year 2, the school provides full-time classroom assistants who offer support with reading, preparation of classroom materials and display. Year 3 share teaching assistants. Learning Support is integrated into the Pre-Preparatory School.
- Reading Assistants are provided where required, in Years 3 - 5 to support children's reading and guide them in their reading and appreciation of books generally. These reading assistants liaise with both class teachers and the librarian, to enhance the school's literacy programme.
- All teaching staff can access a full-time reprographics service, which delivers a full range of photocopying and in-house publishing services to provide high-quality teaching resources for teachers.
- A laboratory technician services the Science laboratories so that teaching staff can take full advantage of the wide range of practical equipment available. Danes Hill believes that experimental work enhances the learning process. Art and Design Technology departments also have the support of a technician to enhance the range of activities offered as part of the varied teaching programmes.
- Outsourced IT services offer technical support to staff throughout the school.
- The maintenance and grounds staff teams make extensive contributions to the sports provision, drama productions and special educational events.

CHILDREN

The school has high expectations of the children who attend the school. An ethos of responsible behaviour and positive commitment during the learning process is encouraged (see Behaviour and Pastoral Care policies).

Children are taught key skills as defined by the National Curriculum incorporated into subject areas. There are 6 main areas:

- Communication – to develop skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing.
- Application of number – to develop skills in mental calculations and their application in a variety of contexts.
- Information and Communication Technology – to develop the ability to use a range of information resources and ICT tools to find, analyse, evaluate and present information for a range of purposes.
- Working with others – to develop the skills to contribute to small group or whole class discussions, to work with others and to meet a challenge.

- Improving own learning and performance – to develop the ability to reflect on and critically evaluate their own work. To identify ways to improve their own learning and performance.
- Problem solving – to develop the skills and strategies to help solve problems they face in learning and life.
- Thinking skills – to develop the ability to know what to learn and how to learn.

PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Danes Hill acknowledges the importance of learning at home and values parental support in assisting children to learn effectively. In this sense, parents are a valued resource. This resource is utilised both by keeping parents fully informed about their children and by encouraging support for the school's homework policy (see section on Homework).

The homework timetable, drawn up by the Deputy Head Academic, in collaboration with Heads of Department, is issued at the beginning of each academic year to keep the parents informed of the subjects and quantities set each night. In addition to the homework timetable, at the beginning of each term, curriculum notes are made available to all parents informing them of the topics to be covered in each subject during the term and to enable parents to support the learning process via trips to museums and theatres, etc. Both documents are available on the Danes Hill website. Homework is communicated to children on SharePoint and supported by prep diaries.

Danes Hill offers many opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress and encourages parents to make full use of them (see Assessment policy). Danes Hill also holds a series of Information Evenings each September for parents from Transition to Year 8, to explain the year ahead in both academic and pastoral terms, and to enable parents to meet the teachers.

COMMUNITY

In recent years, and in response to initiatives within the educational sector, Danes Hill has aimed to increase and broaden children's awareness and understanding of the wider community in which they live. The school provides opportunities for children to learn more about local, national and global issues and to participate in several projects.

- Within the Pre-Preparatory School children learn to take account of issues of personal responsibility and the feelings of others via regular 'circle time', participation in school assemblies and the application of behaviour and bullying policies.
- In Years 2 and 3, form teachers are responsible for developing pupil awareness of wider issues through designated form time for PD.
- In Years 5 – 8, Personal Development is implemented and managed by the school's Head of PD. In general, children consider:
 - Citizenship – this course provides children with the knowledge, skills and understanding to enable them to play an effective role in society in local, national and global contexts. It allows them to learn their own individual rights

and to understand Britain's economy, democratic institutions and values (see Pastoral policy).

- Revision and Thinking skills – time is spent prior to examinations teaching children how to learn independently and to spend their revision time using a variety of techniques.
- Discussion – children are encouraged to research topics, form arguments and to listen to the views of others.

Danes Hill makes extensive use of day and residential trips as a useful teaching tool and means to broaden the range of educational experience and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A full range of trips is organised to build upon learning within the classroom, such as visits to Hampton Court, the Tower of London, the Olympic Park, various places of worship, art galleries, musical concerts and theatres in London. To broaden children's horizons, there are educational visits to places such as Rome and the Battlefields of the First and Second World Wars. Annual sport training camps and tours at home and abroad, including Lanzarote and Barbados, Chamber Choir tours to Europe. A full range of educational material is provided for each trip and specific learning objectives are set. Each year group from Year 4-8 has an annual residential trip in June, with the children in Year 3 camp on the school site overnight.

4. THE HOMEWORK POLICY

Well-planned homework encourages children to develop the practice of independent study, perseverance and self-discipline. It allows children to complete the work started in school, to practise skills or to learn vocabulary taught in class. It also allows more ground to be covered by enabling pupils to concentrate during lessons on those activities requiring the teacher's presence and can exploit materials not accessible in the classroom. The Education Endowment Foundation reports that research has shown the value of homework in terms of increased pupil progress.

Homework must be set according to the homework timetables issued at the beginning of the academic year by the Deputy Head Academic and must not be set on any nights other than those stipulated. Homework is to be handed in either to the appropriate member of staff in person or during the lesson. Some homework will be set for completion by the next day, whilst others will have an extended deadline of up to a week. The amount of homework set depends on the year group and set, and ranges from 20 minutes to 40 minutes per subject per night. In addition to this, it is expected that each child should, wherever possible, read for 15-20 minutes each night. Homework should not be set on the week of whole year Drama productions or when there are other approved school activities, such as evening theatre trips or outings, major sporting events or other special circumstances.

Good reading habits not only develop the children's reading skills, but also help to improve comprehension and written work across the curriculum.

All homework should be related to the teaching in the class and should have its purpose explained to the children. Brief but clear instructions for it should be written on MS Teams and noted in the prep diaries. Throughout the term, there should be a broad range of well-structured tasks set to include reading, writing, learning and analytical assignments.

All homework should be marked and returned to the children as quickly as possible and certainly before the next homework is set. The teacher should include an accurate, positive comment to show where improvement is needed or where progress has been made. All homework marks should be recorded in a mark book so that they can be used to monitor and evaluate the children's progress throughout the year, for reports and for setting purposes.

Homework will be differentiated to meet the needs of the year group and set.

Parents should endeavour to provide their child with a suitable, quiet environment and the time needed for the child to complete their homework. They should be aware of their child's homework timetable so they can check that all the work has been completed. They should also be aware of when they can be actively involved with the homework, for example, by helping to test vocabulary or re-interpreting questions and brainstorming solutions but should realise that it is not helpful to do their child's homework for them.



Bevendean Spiritual and Moral Well-Being Policy

1 Golden Rules and Happy Rules

1.1 In the Autumn Term, Reception and Year 1 children engage in learning about the Golden Rules to encourage team spirit, community care and thoughtfulness. A home/school liaison leaflet encourages parents to support the school in this. Children collect stickers for learning a Golden Rule and receive a certificate for achieving all six rules. Similarly, in the Spring Term, we have created our own Happy Rules with an accompanying home/school leaflet, and these serve to reinforce some community issues but also address personal hygiene, good manners and table etiquette. Mini Transition and Transition children begin to learn these valuable life skills in their classrooms.

2. Assembly and Circle Times

2.1 Assembly takes place for Reception and Year 1 children twice a week. Each week a new theme is introduced and subsequent class discussions and Circle Times are based on this theme to allow children to explore thoughts and feelings within a comfortable, familiar environment where everyone is expected to listen to each other and appreciate their views which may differ from one's own. Transition children also follow the weekly themes in their Circle Time, PSHCE discussions and weekly Celebration Assembly.

3. The Paddock

3.1. At Bevendean we have extended our curriculum to include an outdoor learning environment. Set in an idyllic, secure place in part of the Main School grounds is the outdoor classroom known as 'The Paddock'.

3.2 Early Years children are timetabled to visit the Paddock on a rota to engage in various cross-curricular activities. Year 1 children can have the opportunity to visit The Paddock as frequently as they are able within their curriculum timetable. Transition, Reception and Year 1 children also participate in Forest School at the Paddock at different times throughout the school year.

3.3 Children are provided with the opportunities to make the most of the resources and materials available to them and develop their ideas in the freedom of the outdoors. At the Paddock, the children continue to build on the knowledge, skills and understanding that they have already acquired to make sense of the world and to foster a love of all things natural.

3.4 We recognise that young children thrive, and their minds and bodies develop best when they have access to stimulating outdoor environments for learning through play and real experiences. Forest School is a way of learning which encompasses the senses and strives to develop the whole child. Our approach is to focus on self-awareness, social skills, and empathy to support resilience and confidence through problem solving activities, set achievable tasks and explore in the natural environment.

3.5 At Forest School we aim to create a positive experience where children are encouraged to, develop an awareness of acceptable and responsible behaviour towards one another and the outdoor environment, promote respect, independence and teamwork. The outdoors is a place where children can continue to learn through practical activities but also where we can encourage a sense of awe and wonder in the natural surroundings and changing seasons.

3.6 The safety of young children when they are outdoors is paramount and a culture of 'risk assessment to enable', that permeates every aspect of outdoor provision, is vital for all settings. Young children need to feel secure, nurtured and valued outdoors. This includes clear behavioural boundaries (using rules to enable freedom), nurturing places and times outside and respect for how individual children prefer to play and learn. Risk assessments will be reviewed and updated by the Forest School Leaders and Outdoor Learning Co-Ordinator as the seasons change.

4. Core values for high quality outdoor experiences for young children

4.1 "If children's developing sense of self becomes disconnected from the natural world, then nature comes to be seen as something to be controlled or dominated rather than loved and preserved."

~ R White (2004)

4.2 'Young children's basic need for well-being and involvement, and their urge to explore

and make sense of the world, is developed through high quality play in an outdoor environment' ~ (EYFS 2007)

4.3 Provision for learning outdoors is responsive to the needs of very active learners, those who need sensory or language stimulation and those who need space away from others – it makes provision more inclusive and is a vital learning environment.

4.4 All children in the Early Years Foundation Stage need full access to provision outdoors and it is important to know and meet the needs and interests of each child as an individual. Young children react differently to the spaces and experiences available or created, so awareness and flexibility are key to the adult role. Children with specific individual needs should be supported in the outdoor environment to reach their full potential.

4.5 Observation and assessment (formative and summative), and intervention for support, must be carried out outside. While it is important to ensure the safety of all children, it is equally important to ensure all are sufficiently challenge.

4.6 Outdoor provision can, and should, offer young children an endlessly versatile, changeable, and responsive environment for all types of play where they can manipulate, create, control and modify. This offers a huge sense of freedom, which is not readily available indoors. It also underpins the development of creativity and the dispositions for learning.

4.7 The outdoor space, Forest School and Curriculum sessions must harness the special nature of the outdoors, to offer children what the indoors cannot. This should be the focus for outdoor provision, complementing and extending provision indoors.

4.8 The outdoors should be a dynamic, flexible and versatile place where children can choose, create, change and be in charge of their learning environment.

4.9 Children must have a rich outdoor environment, full of irresistible stimuli, contexts for role-play, exploration and talk, plenty of real experiences and contact with the natural world.

4.10 Children need challenge and risk within a framework of security and safety. The outdoor environment lends itself to offering challenge, helping children learn how to be safe and an awareness of safety of others.

4.11 Outdoor provision must support inclusion and meet the needs of the individuals, offering a diverse range of child-led activities and experiences. As far as possible, young children should participate in decisions and actions affecting their outdoor activities.

4.12 Young children need practitioners who value and enjoy the outdoors themselves and see the potential and consequences it has for young children's well-being and development.

4.13 Attitude, understanding, commitment and positive thinking are important, as well as the skills to make the best use of what the outdoors has to offer and to effectively support child-led learning.

4.14 Children are seriously disadvantaged if they do not learn how to approach and manage physical and emotional risk. They can become either timid or reckless, or be unable to cope with consequences. Young children need to be able to set and meet their own challenges, become aware of their limits and push their abilities (at their own pace), be prepared to make mistakes, and experience the pleasure of feeling capable and competent. Challenge and its associated risk are vital for this. Young children also need to learn how to recognise and manage risk as a life-skill, so as to become able to act safely, for themselves and others.

4.15 As the freedom of outdoors offers the opportunity to move on a large scale, to be active, noisy and messy and to use all their senses with their whole body, young children engage in the way they most need to explore, make sense of life and express their feelings and ideas. Many young children relate much more directly with the learning offered outdoors compared with indoors.

4.16 All areas of learning must be offered through a wide range of holistic experiences, both active and calm, which make the most of what the outdoors has to offer.