

Beech Hall School



Curriculum Policy

2024/25

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Please note:

'School' refers to Beech Hall School, Macclesfield and Chatsworth Schools

'Parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

This is a whole school policy, which applies to both the Junior School, Senior School and Sixth Form
at Beech Hall School, Macclesfield

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1. Curriculum aims

Our vision is for all Beech Hall pupils, their families and colleagues to wake up and bounce into school, excited to learn and work in a genuinely inclusive and respectful learning environment that empowers every child to believe, achieve and become the best version of themselves.

British values are democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance. At Beech Hall School we incorporate the Fundamental British Values throughout our pupils' experience in school: they form part of our expectations of conduct and behaviour and the principles of democracy are exhibited in the election of the School Councillors, as well as the selection of the school's Junior and Senior Head Girl, Boy and prefects. As a school, we also place these in the context of other democratic societies, whilst acknowledging the diversity of political, cultural and religious situations that make up our pupils' global experience. Indeed, the diversity of our pupils is seen as one of our greatest strengths.

British Values are also reflected in our school values, which are Kindness, Respect, Integrity and Ambition. Our school values are central to the school's ethos and all staff are expected to uphold and exemplify these values, whilst guiding pupils adoption of these values and rewarding good examples of pupils demonstrating these values.

School Aims:

- To develop responsible, well-informed, confident and caring individuals by providing a range of opportunities in a friendly, supportive and stimulating environment that inspires students to achieve their personal best.
- To give every child the facilities and resources that will see them fully develop their abilities academically, socially, emotionally and physically.
- To provide all our pupils with the best start in life through a challenging all-round education.

Our curriculum is intended to support the school's aims and values by:

- Providing a broad and balanced education for all pupils that enables them to discover and develop their passions and talents
- Providing an unpressurised but challenging and engaging learning experience for each of our pupils, meeting them at their starting point and based on their readiness to learn
- Providing an education that equips pupils with knowledge and skills in a wide range of subjects that will help them to become well-informed and critical thinking adults
- Being well-planned and sequenced towards cumulatively gaining sufficient knowledge and skills to equip our pupils for future learning and employment
- Supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Supporting pupils' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enabling them to be active by including compulsory PE and/or Games throughout the school
- Promoting a positive attitude towards learning, by encouraging curiosity and critical thinking
- Ensuring equal access to learning for all pupils, with high expectations for progress for every pupil based on their starting points, by providing appropriate levels of challenge and support
- Providing a wide range of subject choices that support pupils' learning and progression, and enable them to work towards achieving their goals
- Developing pupils' independent learning skills and resilience, to equip them for further/higher education and employment

The curriculum plans provide for experiences which cover linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996.

Linguistic: This area is concerned with developing pupils' communication skills and increasing their command of language through listening, speaking, reading and writing. All pupils study English (those with EAL will have intervention English sessions and, in the Seniors, will work towards gaining Functional Skills English Second Language, before possibly moving onto the GCSE English Language course, as appropriate to their situation). Pupils from Year 3 have access to Modern Foreign Languages in their journey through the school. Communication skills, both verbal and written, are an inherent competency developed in all subjects.

Mathematical: This area helps pupils to understand and appreciate relationships and patterns in number and space, to calculate, and to develop their capacity to think logically and express themselves. Their knowledge and understanding of mathematics are being developed in a variety of ways, including practical activity, exploration and discussion in maths, science, computing and D&T (STEAM subjects), the humanities and through application of mathematical skills in other areas such as PE and the Arts.

Scientific: This area is concerned with increasing pupils' knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces and with developing the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry: for example, observing, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments and recording their findings. To this end, all pupils study the three main science disciplines up to the end of Year 8, from then they have a choice of continuing with combined science (at GCSE or ELC as appropriate) or to study just GCSE Biology or all three separate sciences to GCSE. We are planning to include a Science offering as part of the Sixth Form curriculum from Sept 2024.

Technical: This area seeks to develop knowledge and understanding of materials, systems, programming, 3D design, robotics, and electronics, which includes: planning and communicating ideas; working with equipment and materials; and evaluating processes and outcomes. This is achieved by the provision of ICT and Computing from Reception through to a GCSE option, and through D&T (taught by specialist teachers from Year 5, and as a GCSE option from Year 9. Many of these skills are essential competencies also taught and experienced through Art, Music, Drama and Media Studies.

Human and social: This area is concerned with people and their environment, and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions. These key skills and experiences are provided for in History, Geography, English Language and Literature, Media and Film Studies, Art, Performing Arts and various sections of the Science curriculum. PSHEE (jigsaw curriculum) and assemblies add to the opportunities for pupils to experience this aspect of learning.

Physical: This area aims to develop the pupils' physical control and co-ordination, as well as their tactical skills and imaginative responses, and to help them to evaluate and improve their performance. Pupils should also acquire knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of fitness and health. All pupils have time in the week for formal PE lessons. Aspects of health and fitness also form part of the science curriculum. D&T, Art and Performing Arts require and develop hand-eye coordination and physical control. Co-curricula opportunities such as a range of sports clubs and activities, mindfulness and yoga may add to this area of experience.

Aesthetic and creative: This area is concerned with the processes of making, composing and inventing. There are aesthetic and creative aspects in all subjects, but some make a particularly strong contribution, including Art, Design Technology, Computer Science, Media Studies, Music, Drama and the study of literature, because they call for personal, imaginative, and often practical, responses. Pupils have access to all these areas of endeavour both within the main curriculum and as extra-curricular activities.

Through all these activities and experiences all pupils, irrespective of their SEND needs, whether they have an EHC plan or are using English as an additional language, will acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills in all phases of their education at Beech Hall School. PSHEE is an integral part of the pupils' learning experiences, and our aim is to embed Careers into the

curriculum for the 2024/25 academic year. These may be delivered as named timetable subjects, but also through form tutor time, assemblies and visiting speakers. The PSHEE programme (see separate policy) reflects the school's aim and ethos, encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Careers education is for KS3-KS5 pupils, and aims to provide accurate, up-to-date information and presented in an impartial manner, to enable pupils (and parents) to make informed choices about a broad range of career options, GCSE, Sixth Form and university choices, and helps to encourage pupils to fulfil their potential. Reference should be made to our Careers Programme and Careers Action Plan for further detail. These are regularly reviewed against the Gatsby Benchmarks.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the independent schools standards as contained within the Schedule to the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), made with reference to the non-statutory guidance [The Independent School Standards – Guidance for Independent Schools April 2019](#). Whilst we are under no statutory obligation to deliver the [National Curriculum programmes of study](#), in developing a curriculum that is designed to prepare pupils to achieve well at GCSE examinations, as well as meeting our aim to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum, we acknowledge the National Curriculum as a general guide when developing Schemes of Work, up to Key Stage 3.

This policy also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#) and [Equality Act 2010](#), and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's [Governance Handbook](#).

In addition, this policy acknowledges the requirements for promoting the learning and development of children set out in the [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities of Governors, Headmaster and Staff

3.1 The governing board

The proprietors and governors of Chatsworth Schools have overall responsibility for ensuring the school fulfils its statutory obligations. They have delegated responsibility for the approval of this policy to the Headmaster. They provide support and undertake a range of monitoring strategies to ensure that obligations are met, including the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum and facilitating the safeguarding and well-being of the pupils.

3.2 Headmaster

The headmaster is responsible for approving and ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed at least annually
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEND

3.3 Other staff

Other staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

- The Headmaster delegates responsibility for the leadership of curriculum and academic matters to the Director of Studies, including managing requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate

In turn, the Director of Studies delegates responsibility for the leadership of designated subject areas and departments to members of the Middle Leadership Team, as well as individual teachers where they are the teacher-in-charge of a subject or course.

Mr Rafael Babar has been appointed from 1st September 2024 as our new Head of Sixth Form and will be a member of the Middle Leadership Team. He will take responsibility for the oversight of the 6th Form curriculum under the leadership of the Director of Studies.

The careers programme is organised by the Careers Lead who reports to the Director of Studies. We are developing our careers programme with the intention to fully meet the Gatsby Benchmarks by the start of the 2026 academic year. The Careers action plan is reviewed and updated following regular self-evaluation of the school's current provision against the benchmarks.

4. Organisation and planning

Beech Hall School provides non-selective comprehensive education for pupils from Reception (aged 5 in their first year) through to Sixth Form (19 years of age). Academically, the schools is structured thus:

Infant & Junior Dept:

Infants – Reception/Y1

Lower I – Years 2 & 3

Lower II – Years 4 & 5

Upper II – Year 6

Lower Seniors:

Form III – Year 7

Lower IV – Year 8

Upper Seniors:

Upper IV – Year 9

Lower V – Year 10

Upper V – Year 11

6th Form

Lower VI – Year 12

Upper VI – Year 13 (from Sept 2025)

Juniors/Infants' Curriculum

In the Junior Department, pupils in the Infants follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework where much work is delivered thematically through topics. See our EYFS policy for information on how our early years curriculum is delivered.

Our Junior curriculum is intended to be wide-ranging and appropriate for our pupils, many of whom have struggled in traditional mainstream schools. Our Junior curriculum is broadly based on the National Curriculum. For Numeracy and Mathematics we use the [White Rose Maths](#) scheme. The curriculum also includes Forest School, Cooking, Art, MFL, D&T, Performing Arts, PE & Games – these subjects are all planned and delivered by specialist subject teachers.

For personal development, relationships and health education our PSHE teaching utilises a scheme called [Jigsaw](#) – this programme is led by the Deputy Headmistress. Reference should be made to the separate PSHE and RSE policies. Our school values encompass British values and are interwoven throughout the academic and pastoral school life. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is covered through Assemblies and Form Periods.

The lesson allocations for the Junior Curriculum for 2024-25 are as follows:

Subject (periods per week – ppw or equivalent)	Infants (Rec. & Y1)	L1 (Y2 & Y3)	LII (Y4 & Y5)	UII (Y6)
English (inc. Reading, Writing, Phonics and Spellings, story time)	10	10	7	7
Numeracy/Maths	5	5	5	5
Science	Taught through Topics		2	2
History			1	1
Geography			1	1
Games	1	1	2	2
Art	1	1	1	1
ICT/Computing	1	1	1	1
Cooking	1	1	1	2
D&T			1	1

Forest School	1	1	1	1
MFL	1	1	2	2
Music	1	1	1	1
PE/Swimming/Dance/Yoga	4	4	2	2
RE/Philosophy	1	1	1	1
PSHE/Jigsaw	1	1	1	1
Topic	3	3		

Senior Curriculum

The Lower Senior Curriculum is designed to give pupils experience and understanding of a broad range of subjects to prepare them for, and enable them to make informed choices about, their GCSE options for study in the Upper Seniors. The curriculum includes an academic core of English, Maths, Science, Computer Science, Geography, History, MFL and Philosophy, with a strong focus on creative and practical subjects including Art, Drama, Design & Technology, Food/Cooking and PE/Games/Swimming. The personal development of pupils is supported by PSHE (Jigsaw) which includes Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) – reference should be made to the separate PSHE and RSE policies.

Pupils make subject choices during LIV (Year 8) for a 3-year courses as they progress into the Upper Seniors. To ensure a balanced curriculum, all pupils are expected to study English Language and Mathematics at GCSE (or Entry Level Certificate 1-3 and/or Functional Skills Levels 1 and 2 where appropriate), and GCSE Biology, GCSE Combined Science or all three separate Sciences at GCSE. Entry Level Science is available for those who are not able to access the GCSE courses. Additionally, all pupils follow a BTEC certificate Personal Growth & Wellbeing. Our current policy is to offer pupils free choice on the remaining subjects and option blocks are created based on their choices as far as is practicable. Some pupils will have study periods in their timetable during which they are expected to study independently under class supervision.

Careers Guidance

Our aim is to provide an excellent careers provision that runs throughout the school, starting from infants (and even extending to the nursery) where we intend to build on existing visits from the police and fire services, through to our senior pupils receiving individual impartial careers guidance and information about careers related to each subject area. The Director of Studies is working closely with the Careers Lead to develop an action plan for our careers programme based on a self-evaluation of our provision against the Gatsby Benchmarks. Having started in Sept 2023, our aim is to fully meet all 8 benchmarks within a 3-year development period, including developing a careers and UCAS programme for our proposed Sixth Form provision. Please refer to the Careers Action Plan for further details.

Curriculum Planning

Long term curriculum planning starts with a curriculum map – this is reviewed and revised annually ready by subject leaders academic year. From the curriculum map, Schemes of Work are developed by Departments and individual teachers for all subjects which set out the detail of what is to be taught, how and when. Short-term planning is the responsibility of individual teaching staff, most of whom use their planners or electronic documents for this.

Curriculum Timetable Allocation:

The curriculum allocations for Senior pupils for 2024-25 are shown below. These allocations are reviewed annually. (Shading represents optional subjects). Additionally, we aim to take advantage of other learning opportunities, such as the regular assemblies run by the Headmaster, as well as daily Form periods, to develop pupils' critical thinking, personal awareness and values, in line with the school's aim and values.

Subject (1 hour periods per week)	III (Y7)	LIV (Y8)	UIV (Y9)	LV (Y10)	UV (Y11)
English	4	4	4	4	4
Maths	4	4	4	4	4
Science (combined)	3	3	6	6	5
Science (ELC)			4	4	4
Art	2	2	3	3	3
Biology			3	3	3
Chemistry			3	3	3
Computer Science	1	1	3	3	3
Drama	1	1	3	3	3
Design & Technology	2	2	3	3	3
English Literature			3	3	3
Film Studies			3	3	3
Food/Cooking	2	2	3 (BTEC)	3 (BTEC)	3(BTEC)
Further Maths			3	3	3
Games	2	2	2	2	2
Geography	1	1	3	3	3

German			3	3	3
History	1	1	3	3	3
BTEC Health & Wellbeing (BTEC)			1*	1*	
Media Studies			3	3	3
MFL	2	2			
Music	1	1	3	3	3
PE	2	2	3	3	3
Philosophy	1	1			
Physics			3	3	3
PSHEE	1	1	1*	1*	Form Time
Spanish			3	3	3

*BTEC Health & Wellbeing is timetabled with PSHE for a total of 2 ppw from 2024-25

5. Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use baseline testing (such as CAT4 or CEM MidYIS/YELLIS) and other appropriate assessment data to set individual targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can access every subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving good progress from their individual starting point.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned to provide teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our SEN policy.

6. Monitoring arrangements

Senior and Middle Leaders will monitor how subjects are being taught through:

- Learning walks
- Lesson observations
- Book checks
- Feedback from pupils

Subject leaders are responsible for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Director of Studies and approved by SLT or the Headmaster.

7. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- EYFS policy
- Marking & Feedback Policy
- Assessment policy
- Non-examination assessment policy
- SEN policy
- Gifted & Talented Policy
- PSHEE Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- EAL Policy
- Careers Programme

