Fairfield
Prep School

Challenge for All Approach

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1. Introduction

1.1 At Fairfield, challenge is at the heart of everything that we do and is reinforced by our curriculum principles of collaboration, communication, creativity, critical thinking and curiosity.

1.2 Our vision is to foster a nurturing inclusive environment that challenges every pupil to reach their own unique potential across the curriculum, feeling valued and supported on the journey. To assist this vision, our school values aim to create learners who are aspirational, independent and mindful (AIM) through providing challenge for all pupils regardless of their starting point; every pupil should be stretched, supported and inspired to think deeply, work independently and develop as effective learners.

1.3 All staff hold high expectations of the pupils and nurture a culture in which pupils and teachers embrace productive struggle. Through expert teaching of an ambitious curriculum with clear progression and purposeful cross-curricular links, alongside academic rigour and adaptive teaching, we ensure a broad and balanced curriculum with depth of understanding at its core, where all pupils have the opportunity to think critically, reason, make connections and apply their knowledge with confidence.

1.4 Challenge at Fairfield can be:

- Thinking more deeply
- Applying knowledge in unfamiliar contexts
- Making connections across subjects
- Explaining, justifying and evaluating
- Developing independence and perseverance
- Embracing productive struggle through tasks which have desirable difficulty
- For all pupils
- Explicitly planned for across the curriculum and beyond

Challenge is not:

- An add-on task after completing the initial work
- Rushing through content
- Early introduction of the next year's curriculum
- Only for a defined group

2. Aims

2.1 Ambitious Curriculum

2.1.1 At Fairfield, our curriculum is designed to inspire and engage all learners by cultivating their intellectual curiosity and fostering a love for lifelong learning. With a focus on metacognition, pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own thinking, developing the self-awareness and critical thinking skills essential for academic and personal success.

2.1.2 Our core values-aspirational, independent, mindful-are interwoven into the curriculum, ensuring pupils not only excel academically but also grow into well-rounded individuals. Alongside the values, we nurture principles that underpin curriculum areas (The 6C's) in our pupils such as curiosity and creativity, empowering them to approach each subject with confidence and an open mind [See appendix 1].

2.1.3 Our curriculum challenges pupils to explore new ideas, ask thoughtful questions, and develop strategies to understand how they learn best, setting the stage for their future achievements. The curriculum is regularly reviewed by Heads of Department (HoDs) in partnership with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to ensure it is best meeting the needs of all pupils.

2.2 Quality First Teaching

2.2.1 The principles of good teaching and learning provide a foundation for effective provision for all pupils, and the most crucial aspect of this provision is delivered through everyday lessons in the classroom. Facilitating appropriate levels of challenge is a collective responsibility of all staff involved in teaching and learning at Fairfield. In line with this, our lessons integrate Quality First Teaching (QFT) strategies. Adaptive teaching allows staff to adjust how they teach in real time so all pupils can access, engage with and succeed in the learning. By embedding these practices, we ensure that every pupil is challenged and supported to succeed.

2.3 Culture of Challenge

2.3.1 At Fairfield, we are committed to fostering a Culture of Challenge, where pursuing aspirational goals and nurturing independent thinkers is at the heart of what we do. We encourage pupils to embrace challenge as a positive and transformative experience, shifting the perception from obstacle to opportunity. With a focus on metacognition, our children are taught to articulate the significance of challenge and understand how desirable difficulty enhances their learning and thinking skills. We emphasise that true challenge involves developing higher-order thinking skills rather than merely advancing through more of the same work or jumping ahead in the curriculum.

2.3.2 Our lessons are crafted to offer opportunities for open-ended questions, exploration of possibilities, rich opportunities for oracy and multiple pathways to solutions. By engaging with these challenges, children learn to thrive, deepening their understanding and ensuring that knowledge truly resonates and endures. Furthermore, we actively support parents in appreciating the value and breadth of this approach, focusing on the depth of learning rather than the speed of progress.

2.4 Developing Individual Potential

2.4.1 We take the belief that effective provision for all pupils incorporates effective provision for more able pupils. However, whilst we advocate a challenge for all approach, we recognise that some pupils show the aptitude to be more able learners. As a school, we recognise that many of our pupils are already achieving at a high level and we need to support them to continue to progress at a high level.

2.4.2 The progress of all learners is monitored and discussions and support put in place for any who may be underachieving. Any particular strengths, or underachievement, of pupils are discussed proactively with parents at Parent Teacher meetings or on other occasions as necessary, with suggestions of how these will be supported in school and how they could be supported out of school.

2.4.3 Some pupils may also have additional learning needs, which can present unique challenges to their learning journey. Where needed, the Learning Support department will advise on any additional

resources or strategies to address any barriers which arise, allowing them to excel while accommodating their individual needs.

3. Assessment

3.1 At Fairfield, we have aspirational expectations of attainment for all, ensuring that each pupil is encouraged to develop as an effective learner. Outcomes for pupils at Fairfield have the ambitious aim of being above national expectations.

3.2 There is an annual assessment cycle, utilising a range of assessment methods, both formative and summative, to provide a comprehensive understanding of each pupil's attainment and progress. Formative assessments and low-stakes testing provide ongoing feedback and insights into each pupil's understanding, allowing for timely adjustments in teaching strategies. Summative assessments offer a culminative overview of a pupil's achievements and areas for growth. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own learning, engaging in self-assessment and identifying areas for improvement. They are also given the opportunity to respond to teacher feedback and use this to improve their learning.

3.3 Through these varied approaches, we ensure that every learner's progress is accurately monitored and supported. Quantitative data is analysed by class teachers, Head of Years (HOYs) and HoDs in conjunction with the Deputy Head Academic. Through this detailed analysis, targeted interventions are implemented to support and enhance learning outcomes where necessary to ensure pupils receive the tailored challenge they need to excel.

4. NACE

4.1 Fairfield is proud to be a member and an Ambassador school of the National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE), reflecting our belief that enhancing provision for more able students elevates the learning experience for all pupils. Through NACE's support, we are committed to recognising and maximising the potential of all our pupils and NACE offers invaluable guidance and expertise, aiding us in offering aspirational opportunities which cater for all learners, including those identified as more able. Through CPD opportunities,

school visits and sharing of resources, this partnership fuels our dedication to develop our educational pedagogy and gives the opportunity to share good practice with other schools. Fairfield staff contribute resources to NACE Members across the country and regularly attend CPD and Network meetings.

5. Enrichment and Opportunities

5.1 At Fairfield, our commitment to offering a "Challenge for All" approach is reflected in the wealth of enrichment opportunities and experiences we provide. We design these experiences to extend thinking, nurture talents and encourage personal growth across every year group.

5.2 By fostering an environment rich in diverse activities and challenges, we empower pupils to be aspirational, mindful and independent, exploring their interests and developing their potential across and beyond the curriculum. Some of the enrichment opportunities currently provided are:

- The opportunity to participate in competitions in key curriculum areas to enrich the curriculum and extend thinking.
- The opportunity to take part in productions and concerts regularly in all year groups.
- Opportunities to showcase own research projects (e.g. Science Fair; Engineering Day)
- A wide range of off-site educational visits (both day and residential) offered to enhance the curriculum and support personal development.
- Extended homework projects which promotes parental involvement and enhances learning that takes place in the classroom.
- Collaboration with the Senior Schools and Loughborough University to deepen learning (such as work with LHS Sixth Form English Ambassadors)
- A wide range of extracurricular clubs (such as chess, debating, maths problems, science, strategy games and cookery) - to extend thinking and broaden exposure.
- Leadership opportunities for children (e.g. Form Captain, Eco Captain, House Captain, School Councillor)

6. Publication and Availability

6.1 This document is available on request.

7. Review of Document

7.1 This document will be reviewed every two years or earlier if significant updates are required.

Appendix 1: Fairfield Curriculum Principles

