Curriculum Policy

Berkhamsted Prep and Pre-Prep

Berkhamsted Senior Schools & Sixth

Heatherton

Berkhamsted Day Nursery Ltd.

Revision and Terminology: Please refer to the School's Policies Policy.

Policy owner:	Vice Principal; Deputy Head Curriculum and Assessment
Type of policy:	Regulatory
Regulatory Body:	Department for Education / Independent Schools Inspectorate
Relevant Legislation / Guidance:	Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 as amended
Last reviewed by / date:	Exec on 10 September 2026
Last approved by / date:	Governors' Education Committee on 23 September 2026 Full Governors on 23 September 2026
Next review due:	Michaelmas 2029
This version published:	**25 September 2026**
Circulation:	✓All Staff & Governors ✓Inspection Portal ✓School Website ✓Parent Portal ✓Senior & Sixth Pupils
Linked Policies:	Behaviour and Discipline Careers Children Looked After English as an Additional Language (EAL) Separation by Sex IT Acceptable Use and AI (Pupils) Relationships Education and PSHE (Preps) RSE and PSHE (Senior and Sixth) Progression Special Educational Needs and Disability (Pupils)

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

Contents

1 Scope of this policy 3
2 Practice and Procedures – Learning and Teaching 4
3 Literacy and Oracy: Aims 5
4 Independent learning 6
5 Adaptive teaching and learning *(Please see SEND Policy)* 6
6 Diamond Structure (See Separation by Sex Policy) 7
7 SEND (Please see SEND and EAL Policies) 8
8 Enrichment 8
9 IT and AI (see IT Policies) 9
10 Home Learning 10
11 Marking 10
12 Practice and Procedures – Assessment 11
13 Learning Consultations 11
14 Reporting to Pupils and Parents: Senior School and Sixth Form 11
15 Reporting to Parents: Prep School, Pre-Prep and BDNL 12
16 Reports: Heatherton 12
17 Extra-Curricular 12
Appendix 1 – Literacy: All Schools 13
Appendix 2 – Home Learning, Marking, and Assessment Procedures – Berkhamsted Pre-Prep, Prep and Heatherton 15
Appendix 3 - Home Learning, Marking, and Assessment Procedures – Berkhamsted Senior Schools and Sixth Form 23
Appendix 4 – Achievement Grades and Attitude to Learning Indicators 25
Appendix 5 – Curriculum Overview 29

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

1 Scope of this policy

1.1 In order to achieve the School's aims, the curriculum is designed to ensure that all pupils of compulsory school age experience a broad and balanced education and to provide secure foundations for the future (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996). Our curriculum ensures that all pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. Our curriculum also aims to play a part in developing a pupil's character by providing opportunities for self-reflection, spiritual development, taking intellectual risks, calculated failure and the chance to bounce back successfully.

1.2 In the Early Years, pupils follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and experience learning opportunities in a wide range of specialist subjects. Staff in Key Stage One understand that there needs to be a smooth transition between the Foundation Stage and Year One and there will be some thematic based learning alongside the core subjects.

1.3 Children in Key Stages Two and Three continue to experience linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and creative education. At Key Stage Three, most pupils continue to study two languages unless it is deemed in their best interests to study one.

1.4 As pupils progress through the school, a balance between breadth across curricular areas and choice that will enable pupils to realise their potential, is struck.

1.5 Pupils in Y10 study a core curriculum consisting of English (Language and Literature), Mathematics and Personal Development. In addition, six optional subjects supplement the core (at least one of which must be Chemistry, Physics or Biology) and a balanced programme would normally include a language, a creative subject and a humanities subject. To give pupils the greatest possible choice, timetable option columns are created from pupils' choices. Most pupils will also follow the "Learning Pathways" programme which consists of independent learning, an opportunity to study an HPQ and coached study. Some pupils study "Additional Science" and complete three science GCSEs in two option blocks and the Learning Pathway. There is an application process for Additional Science which helps the school to ensure that students opting for this course will flourish with the demands of accelerated study.

1.6 From the start of Year 12 most students study three A Levels. Students who study Maths and Further Maths are expected to study four A Levels. Additionally, a small number of students may take a fourth A Level on an accelerated/independent course. The entry requirement for entry to the Sixth are set out in the School's Progression Policy. Furthermore, there are entry requirements for some A Level subjects which can be found in the A Level Guide.

1.7 Progression into Year 13 depends on satisfactory levels of attainment in Year 12. This process will be overseen by the Head of Sixth and informed largely by the Year 12 Exams. There will be a resit process for students that do not attain at least a C grade in the Year 12 Exam

1.8 To deliver the curriculum, Heads of Departments draw up appropriate programmes of study and schemes of work and ensure that members of their department are aware of, and follow, the School's Learning, Teaching and Assessment practice. At Key Stages 4

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

and 5, they select the most appropriate specifications from the external examination boards. As well as subject-specific skills, the curriculum seeks to deliver skills such as literacy, numeracy, digital competency, communication skills, research skills and independent learning across the curriculum as appropriate. Each Department is required to map the ways in which they fulfil these requirements via internal Departmental Handbooks. A Curriculum Overview setting out the amount of teaching time per week for different subjects across the various Key Stages can be found at Appendix 5.

1.9 Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) is delivered primarily as a curriculum subject (called PSHE at KS2 and below, and Personal Development at KS3 and above) up to Year 11 and in the lecture programme from Years 12 and 13. In addition, some PSHE topics are delivered within the pastoral setting and other subject lessons (e.g. sex education in Biology); others (e.g. drugs education) are presented by visiting speakers to particular year groups. Further details can be found in the school policies on Personal Development (RSE & PSHE (Senior & Sixth) and Relationships Education and PSHE (Preps)). Opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are included in curriculum subjects where appropriate.

1.10 British Values – Berkhamsted Schools Group promotes fundamental British values of:

1.10.1 Democracy

1.10.2 The Rule of Law

1.10.3 Individual Liberty

1.10.4 Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths (or none), beliefs, and aesthetic perspectives.

These values are promoted through subject lessons; assemblies; PSHE; and School Council/Pupil Voice

1.11 Diversity and inclusion are also promoted through the curriculum with the Director of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion, Senior Leaders, Heads of Department and Subject Leaders auditing and monitoring the curriculum to ensure that pupils develop empathy and understanding of protected characteristics such as race, sexuality and gender.

1.12 Careers guidance is given under the direction of the Careers Department and details of the programme which covers Years 7 to 13 can be found in the Careers Department Summary of Provision and in the Careers Policy which is available to pupils via Berkhamsted Hub. At Key Stages 3 and 4, pupils are encouraged to think about career options and their aptitude for various careers, so that appropriate subject choices can be made in Year 9 for GCSE, in Year 11 for A level courses and in the Sixth Form for Further and Higher Education (alongside the specialist advice provided by Tutors and Assistant Heads, subject teachers and members of the Sixth Form Senior Management Team and Careers staff in the Sixth Form).

2 Practice and Procedures – Learning and Teaching

2.1 Our whole-school approach to teaching and learning focuses on metacognition. Metacognition is 'thinking about thinking' and links neuroscience, behavioural psychology and education to better understand how the human brain learns. It teaches students to

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

have an awareness and understanding of their own thought processes. At Berkhamsted our starting point is that the brain is like a muscle in that its intelligence grows with exercise: in short, learning is learnable. Furthermore, the language we use when talking about learning is significant, and both learning power and metacognition offer rich but common vocabulary for talking about what learners do, thus allowing pupils to make links between different topics and indeed the things they learn, within and beyond the classroom. Colleagues are supported to develop metacognition with Years 7-13.

2.2 Why this approach? Universities and employers are placing an increasing emphasis on the dispositions (or habits) that potential applicants demonstrate as well as the skills and qualifications that they have acquired. They also require and test for character traits such as resilience, self-motivation, reciprocity and empathy. As young people move into higher education and the workforce they will need to continue to learn, to be adaptable and retrain often. This has most recently been observed in the workplace as organisations adapt to the rapid development and adoption of artificial intelligence technologies.. To prepare students for this metacognition encourages teaching which develops dispositions and enables students to reflect how they learn best. Subject specific content and skills can be taught alongside learning dispositions and metacognitive techniques to stimulate independent learning and help pupils to develop resilience and flexibility in the face of challenges: vital for success in an ever-changing world.

2.3 'Learning and Teaching' is a key area of responsibility for all academic staff. The Principal and Vice Principal, through the line-management structure across the schools and working together with the Governing Body, are responsible for:

2.3.1 Creating/maintaining a culture and an environment which promotes and secures good teaching, effective learning, high standards of achievement, good behaviour and discipline;

2.3.2 determining, organising and implementing the curriculum and its assessment, and monitoring and evaluating in order to identify and act on areas for improvement;

2.3.3 ensuring effective teaching of literacy, numeracy and information technology skills;

2.3.4 monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and standards for learning and achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational or linguistic needs, in order to set and meet challenging, realistic targets for improvement;

2.3.5 developing effective links with the community, including business and industry, to extend the curriculum and enhance learning and teaching;

2.3.6 creating and maintaining an effective partnership with parents to support and improve pupils' achievement and personal development.

3 Literacy and Oracy: Aims

3.1 To provide children with the opportunity to read, write and speak with confidence, fluency and understanding.

3.2 To ensure equality of opportunity and access to the curriculum for all pupils regardless of

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, or socio-economic background. Reasonable adjustments and support will be provided where appropriate. To ensure Literacy is taken as a whole school concern and is taught across a range of subject areas.

3.3 English underpins and supports access to the whole curriculum. Therefore, realistic and relevant contexts to support the development of literacy should be sought in all subject areas.

3.4 To inspire within the children a passion for a broad range of literature.

3.5 To seek to ensure that all children achieve their full potential in all aspects of literacy by the time they move from primary/Prep to secondary education, or from secondary to higher education.

3.6 To ensure that the children are able to acquire the appropriate skills to read and write for different purposes and different audiences.

3.7 To use phonics to encode and decode accurately (Pre-Prep / Prep).

3.8 To use grammar and punctuation accurately.

3.9 To understand spelling conventions.

3.10 To teach children how to plan, draft, review, revise and edit their own writing so that they can produce their very best pieces of work.

3.11 Through reading and writing both non-fiction and fiction, to develop the children's powers of imagination and critical awareness.

3.12 All staff are expected to encourage high standards of literacy in marking pupils' work to signal the importance of high standards of literacy. Specifically they should mark work in connection with departmental marking procedure and the criteria in Appendix 1 using a universal code.

4 Independent learning

4.1 Independent Learning is defined as any learning activity which takes place without the direct interaction with a teacher. This could include brief activities done in the classroom, in pairs for example; group work; a piece of research home learning; an extended piece of research: wider reading; attending a lecture; entering an essay competition or an olympiad. Teachers should provide opportunities for independent learning on a regular basis, in a way that is structured to the needs of the pupil. Department schemes of work should contain examples of independent learning approaches specific to their subject and stage, and identify appropriate opportunities for it.

5 Adaptive teaching and learning *(Please see SEND Policy)*

5.1 Adaptive teaching occurs when the teacher adapts their teaching to the needs of the individual pupils in their class. This may be the teacher reacting to what they notice during the lesson after checking for pupil understanding and progress or it may be a

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

planned intervention by the teacher with the intention of maximising the achievements of pupils based on their differing individual needs. In promoting effective learning and teaching, staff should be aware of the complementary needs of all learners and use this understanding to enhance classroom practice.

5.2 It is the School's responsibility to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to fulfil their potential, as appropriate to each individual. All teachers should have high expectations of each pupil. A range of teaching styles should be consciously employed in order to respond to the needs of individuals. The aptitude and previous experience of pupils influence their learning and teachers need to plan for continuity and progression. Good classroom management should allow all pupils to actively participate appropriately in a lesson. Patterns of assessment should allow for appropriate adaptive teaching in order to cater for the individual needs, and respond to the strengths, of each pupil.

5.3 The most important prerequisite for effective adaptive teaching is relevant and accurate knowledge of the pupils and teachers' checking for pupils' understanding and progress. This relies on close liaison between the pastoral and academic staff and strong links between home and school.

5.4 The school promotes effective teaching and learning through regular CPD which encourages teachers to take a research-led approach to classroom practice. This is based on the science of learning, and includes strategies such as interleaving, retrieval practice and spaced learning. In Key Stages 3-5, the use of such teaching and learning strategies is monitored through the use of a Learning Insights App which is completed after lesson observations.

5.5 This policy has regard to the Government guidance "The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children: Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities" (DfE, February 2018): the circumstances and particular needs of Looked After Children (CLA) and Previously Looked After Children (PLA) should normally be considered and provided for in the application and review of this policy. For further details, please refer to the Children Looked After Policy.

6 Diamond Structure (See Separation by Sex Policy)

6.1 The five schools of the Berkhamsted Schools Group based in Berkhamsted are organised in a Diamond Model, with boys and girls taught co-educationally up to the end of Year 6, then in single-sex classes between Year 7-11, with a co-educational Sixth Form.

6.2 Between Year 7-11, boys and girls at Berkhamsted have lessons taught to them separately, on different sites, and on different timetables. Whilst this may appear to be merely for historical reasons, it forms part of the School's positive action both to ensure that boys and girls are able to achieve more in their academic studies during the GCSE years, and to help to ensure that GCSE and A level choices are not gender biased. Whilst the timetables are separate, the curriculum in Years 7-9 is identical (see 6.3 below): the same subjects are provided with the same timetable allocations, and equality of provision is of the highest priority. For more information see the Separation by Sex Policy.

6.3 The curriculum offered in Y10-11 by both schools isidentical. However, the School reserves the right to vary the GCSE Options that are available to pupils in either School

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

to study. The criteria for making decisions about the curriculum below is not exhaustive, but gives an indication of the considerations that would be made:

6.4 The Senior Management Team would consider the criteria below if the number of pupils dropped below 5:

6.4.1 Does the subject experience become a negative one because of the nature of the subject itself?

6.4.2 Is the subject an area that the School wishes to encourage participation where there is currently an imbalance between genders?

6.5 The Senior Leadership will **not** make decisions on the criteria below if the number of pupils dropped below 5:

6.5.1 Reputational Damage

6.5.2 Previous public examination results

6.5.3 The subject is going to be prohibitively expensive to operate

6.6 Boys and girls in years 7-11 also receive co-education in the broader sense, via activities such as trips, Drama, Music, Outdoor Education, CCF, and Clubs and Societies.

7 SEND (Please see SEND and EAL Policies)

7.1 The curriculum is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. The School accepts responsibility for helping to develop children's self-esteem. If a pupil finds the formal curriculum too difficult our support may be altered to help achieve a positive outcome. If it is thought necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, then the School does so only after the parents of the child have been consulted. If a child displays signs of having a special need, or has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), contact will be made with the Learning Support department and the necessary adjustments will be made.

7.2 Pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) have educational needs of a particular kind. Provision for this is set out under the English as an additional language policy.

8 Enrichment

8.1 Senior/Sixth: By creating a culture that celebrates initiative and endeavour, we seek to stimulate, stretch and challenge all pupils at the School. MIDYIS and ALIS data is used to identify bands of ability and potential, helping to inform teaching and learning strategies, target appropriate levels of challenge, and support students in achieving their best outcomes. Rather than using such labels as 'gifted and talented', we recognise and reward pupils who demonstrate an enthusiasm for learning and who possess a growth mindset. We do not keep a fixed list of able, gifted and talented students but aim to challenge all students, nurture their passions and teach to the highest ability. The School offers an extensive range of enrichment opportunities, which are accessible and communicated to all pupils.

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

8.2 Preps: We have high expectations of all our students throughout their primary years. We encourage a growth mindset and use of a metacognitive approach. This underpins all teaching and learning provision. Having the expectation that every student is working at a level that stretches and challenges him or her, no matter what their starting point, is an important part of our educational ethos.

8.3 The schools and teachers will provide a challenging and enriched curriculum for all. A teaching from the top approach to planning can ensure we meet the needs of our highest pupils. Having such expectations means that students are encouraged to engage in their own learning by being active participants in lessons and taking responsibility for their own learning. Our whole school Learning strategy supports this approach. The emphasis will be on increasing depth before breadth of the curriculum for students rather than providing an accelerated curriculum. Challenge is the driving force of teaching. Only by giving our students work that challenges them, and having the highest expectations of them, will they be able to move beyond what they know and can do now.

8.4 Various challenges and opportunities, both in the classroom and as extra-curricular activities, are available for the pupils throughout the academic year.

9 IT and AI (see IT Policies)

9.1 IT is an essential tool in contemporary education. Teachers, where appropriate, should plan lessons which best utilise IT resources to maximise learning and should be encouraged to engage with training to develop their IT skills. Staff should encourage the use of appropriate software to enhance learning and teaching in all subject areas most notably Microsoft Applications such as Teams and OneNote. Use of devices must be in accordance with the School's IT Policies.

9.2 The guidelines below are designed to ensure that AI is used ethically and effectively to benefit students and teachers:

9.2.1 Integration of Policy on AI in education:

9.2.1.1 AI is integrated into the curriculum where it is age-appropriate to enhance students' learning experiences and foster skill development in various areas.

9.2.1.2 The use of AI is strategically employed as a supplemental tool to support and expand upon classroom instruction, facilitating personalised learning opportunities.

9.2.1.3 AI provides students with access to a vast range of information, resources, and interactive learning experiences, promoting independent research, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.

9.2.1.4 Teachers guide and monitor students' use of AI, ensuring that it aligns with the curriculum objectives and learning outcomes.

9.2.1.5 AI does not replace direct instruction or teacher interaction but serves as an additional resource to enrich the educational experience.

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

9.2.2 Ethical Use and Safeguarding:

9.2.2.1 The use of AI by staff and students adheres to the school's policies on online safety, data protection, and acceptable IT usage.

9.2.2.2 Teachers provide clear guidelines and instruction on responsible and ethical use of AI, including respect for intellectual property rights, appropriate communication, and awareness of potential biases in AI-generated content.

9.2.2.3 Safeguarding measures will be in place to ensure students' emotional well-being and online safety while interacting with AI.

9.2.3 Professional Development:

9.2.3.1 Teachers receive appropriate training and professional development opportunities to effectively incorporate AI into their teaching practice.

9.2.3.2 Ongoing support and collaboration among staff members will be encouraged to share best practices, address challenges, and continuously improve the integration of AI in the curriculum.

9.2.4 Evaluation and Review:

9.2.4.1 The effectiveness and impact of AI on pupil learning and attainment will be regularly evaluated and reviewed.

9.2.4.2 Feedback from students, teachers, and parents is gathered to assess the benefits and limitations of AI in enhancing the curriculum.

9.2.4.3 Adjustments and improvements are made based on evaluation findings to ensure the optimal integration and utilisation of AI in line with the school's aims and the evolving needs of the curriculum.

10 Home Learning

10.1 Home Learning plays a significant role in encouraging pupils to become independent lifelong learners and develop their character traits of resilience, self-reflection, and self-regulation. It should aim to enrich their learning, to reinforce classwork and extend their knowledge and understanding.

10.2 The Home Learning timetable has been devised to ensure that pupils are given the opportunity to study independently, but also have time to develop extra-curricular interests, especially in the lower part of the Senior School. Home Learning should be set regularly by teachers as directed by the member of staff that manages the curriculum within each school (See Appendix 2 & 3). Subject teachers and House Tutors monitor pupil progress with their Home Learning.

11 Marking

11.1 Our aim is to ensure that across departments all pupils have experience of effective marking, which not only has consistency within individual subjects but also is cohesive in

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

approach across the School. The School sets out to provide a framework for each key stage, which ensures that pupils understand marking criteria, related to the learning objectives for the piece of work, what the marks mean and gives a clear indication of how they can improve. Marking and feedback should encourage self-reflection and enable pupils to move forwards in their learning. Teachers must ensure they retain accurate records of pupils' marks for reference at Learning Consultation/Parents' Evenings or in response to individual parental enquiry or departmental review.

12 Practice and Procedures – Assessment

12.1 Assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching and may be:

12.1.1 ***formative***, in providing information which teachers can use in deciding how a pupil's learning should be taken forward and in giving pupils themselves clear and understandable targets and feedback about their achievements. Marking should focus on ways to improve rather than on awarding a numerical mark;

12.1.2 ***summative***, in providing overall evidence of the achievements of a pupil and what s/he knows, understands and can do;

12.1.3 ***diagnostic*,** in providing comparative aggregated information about pupils' achievements as an indicator of where there needs to be further effort, resources, changes in sets or curriculum, etc.

13 Learning Consultations

13.1 For Senior School and Sixth Form, Learning Consultations take place once per year via the SchoolCloud platform and are designed to foster effective communication and collaboration between pupil and teacher in order to support the holistic development and academic success of each pupil. After each Learning Consultation, pupils in Years 7-10 and Year 12 reflect on their teacher feedback and create their own action plans for the academic year.

13.2 For the Preps, please see information about Learning Review Meetings and Parents' Evenings in sections 15 (for Berkhamsted Prep, Pre-Prep and BDNL) and 16 (for Heatherton) below.

13.3 The recording of any meetings – including online Learning Consultations, Learning Review Meetings and Parents Evening meetings - is strictly prohibited. This includes recording by any device or technology, such as mobile phones, screen-recording software, smart watches, AI-enabled eyewear (including Meta Smart Glasses), or similar devices. This policy is designed to encourage open and honest dialogue and to ensure that the focus remains on working collaboratively to support and enhance pupil learning.

14 Reporting to Pupils and Parents: Senior School and Sixth Form

14.1 Grades are issued three times a year. These contain achievement grades and Attitude to Learning Indicators (Appendix Four).

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

14.2 Learning Reports are produced once a year for all year groups. Years 7-10 and Year 12 also complete Learning Consultation Reports once a year.

14.3 Years 11 and 13 receive an Examinations Advice Report in the Lent term.

15 Reporting to Parents: Prep School, Pre-Prep and BDNL

15.1 For Years 1 – 6, Interim Reports are written in December and March with Learning Review Meetings held in early Michaelmas and in Lent terms each year. These contain an attainment judgement for maths and English together with a short comment, or developmental target, giving an indication how the pupil could improve or make progress. Lengthier summative reports are produced at the end of the year.

15.2 Stepping Stones and Reception: Interim Reports, which will include Tapestry observations, are written in the second half of the Michaelmas and Lent term. Parent Learning Review Meetings occur in the first half of Michaelmas and Lent terms each year and a full 'end of year' report is written in the Trinity term.

15.3 BDNL: Parents receive learning journeys via Tapestry regularly throughout the year, with additional comments included where appropriate prior to bi-annual Parent Meetings.

16 Reports: Heatherton

16.1 For Years 1-6, in the Michaelmas and Lent Terms, following Parent Meetings just before the half term break, parents are provided with a full written report with grades and targets at the end of each of those terms. Lengthier summative reports are produced at the end of the year before the summer holiday.

16.2 EYFS: Parents receive learning journeys via Famly regularly throughout the year, with additional teacher summary comments included prior to termly Parent Meetings. Full written reports are written at the end of Nursery and Reception. Reception children's reports include the Early Years Profile.

17 Extra-Curricular

17.1 Each School has a programme of activities which is appropriate to the educational needs of the pupils.

17.2 Each School ensures the effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British Society. Please refer to the RSE and PSHE (Senior & Sixth) Policy and the Relationships Education and PSHE (Preps) Policy.

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

Appendix 1 – Literacy: All Schools

It is intended as a guide to ways in which teaching staff can make an active contribution to:

- making students more aware of the benefits of better literacy;
- raising literacy standards across the school.

Spelling

At Pre-Prep and Prep levels when pupils are developing their spelling skills, spelling strategies will be promoted.

At all times in the Senior Schools, pupils should be expected to spell accurately, using a dictionary if necessary. Spelling errors might be marked with a circle around the error and the margin code '***sp***' when appropriate. If mistakes dominate the writing, especially in the cases of pupils with special educational needs, professional judgement should be used to assess whether to correct the first paragraph only and write a summative comment at the end.

Choice of Vocabulary

At BDNL, Pre-Prep and Prep levels when pupils are developing their vocabularies, there should be an appropriate degree of assistance and teaching provided in helping them to develop and extend their working vocabularies. This could be through developing word classes (such as synonyms and antonyms), forming words through common prefixes and suffixes and, later, through making judgements which distinguish between formal and informal registers etc.

At a Senior School level, pupils should be increasingly aware of lexical choices formed by the task and audience. Infelicities of word choice should be commented upon, especially if it is erring towards slang/idiom. Teachers should aim to incorporate discussions of words and their etymology to equip pupils for a host of new words and, at the same time, build their understanding of how words are constructed.

The use of specific subject terminology should be encouraged and pupils made aware if this is rewarded in mark schemes for both exams and coursework. Where possible, this terminology should be displayed in classrooms.

Punctuation

Pupils in the Pre-Prep should be introduced to punctuation devices in a staged and gradual way (beginning with simple full-stops with commas and inverted commas as later additions). Increasingly, as the pupils enter the Senior School, there should be an expectation that a variety of punctuation will be used accurately, with the code '**P**' might be used where appropriate. By the time the pupils

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

reach the end of KS3, they should have a command of all punctuation devices and be able to apply them accurately.

Grammar

Pupils in Key Stages 1 - 4 should be given strategies for coping with common grammatical errors (these may include structural issues such as creating sentences and paragraphs with accuracy) and there should be an appropriate focus on the foundations for good grammar (elements could include the formation of verb tenses, agreement, grammatical mood, parts of speech etc.)

Handwriting/Presentation

Children will, once they have gained the appropriate gross and fine motor skills, be encouraged to hold a pencil and mark make, following which they will be taught how to form recognisable letters. As the writing develops emphasis should be placed on the development of good letter shapes in cursive scripts. Once they are more confident writers, pupils should normally use a fountain pen, 'roller ball' pen or biro. These are a requirement in the Senior Schools. Rulers should be used for drawing straight lines when underlining or in diagrams. In the Senior Schools, written work should be headed with the date, the work title and the pupil's name where appropriate. Such headings should be underlined. Loose worksheets should be kept in good condition and, if appropriate, secured into exercise books or departmental folders. When working on electronic devices, pupils are expected to present and save work in an effective, logical manner.

Speaking and Listening

Speaking and Listening should be accorded equal status with reading and writing and a variety of opportunities both for speaking and listening should be offered across the range of age groups. In the Early Years, Speaking and Listening as part of Communication and Language, forms an integral part of all activities and lessons. Pupils in Key Stage One and Two will have a variety of opportunities to discuss, debate, recite, reflect and perform; pupils may be entered for LAMDA examinations. In Senior Schools, teachers should aim to extend classroom discussion whenever possible to include current affairs and relevant debates to help pupils develop language skills which will help with their writing. Speaking and Listening is an assessed requirement for the AQA English Specification with a unit resulting in a certificate of achievement and evidence of a range of grades to be sent to the board.

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

Appendix 2 – Home Learning, Marking, and Assessment Procedures – Berkhamsted Pre-Prep, Prep and Heatherton

Home Learning

- Teachers will consider carefully the types of task set for home learning. In particular, it is important that all children for whom the home learning is set are able to perform it successfully and more or less independently. This may well require adaptive tasks being set. There may be times when tasks require more definite home support (such as research tasks or being heard read), but teachers expect that responses will be to some extent variable.

- At Key Stage 2, children will be expected to complete regular home learning activities that support and reinforce their learning in school. These will include English (reading, spellings, comprehension or grammar-based activities), maths topics, multiplication facts, curriculum-based tasks and occasionally project work. In addition, we encourage the children to read at home each evening with their parents.

- Throughout the school, reading tasks will often be given to be done at home. Care of books taken home for home learning should be emphasised and enforced. Some home learning tasks may require the pupil to have access to a computer or the internet.

Amount of Home learning

- The children have an intensive school day; it is in the course of the school day, with well-planned professional instruction, that most worthwhile academic learning will occur. However, the School's aim is for the children to develop good working practices and self-discipline, which they will need for success in their future educational life and beyond. A clear and regular home learning programme can play an important part in this development.
- In the Early Years from Reception, pupils will receive phonic practice with reading home learning where appropriate, and problem-solving activities.
- At Key Stage 1, home learning will most often entail reading, spellings and simple maths or topic related activities. Reinforcing the habit of reading every night is one of the School's main aims and it is expected that the parents will read to their children as well.
- During the course of Year 1, specific short home learning tasks such as learning spellings or maths tasks will be given regularly, preparing children for the more increased expectations in Year 2 where more tasks will be given.
- At Key Stage 2, home learning time should be about 20 minutes each night in Year 3, 30 minutes in Year 4 and up to 40 minutes for Years 5 & 6. Teachers will carefully monitor any longer tasks set over a number of nights.

The role of Parents and Carers

- Parents and carers have a vital role to play in their child's education and home learning is an important part of this process. The School asks parents and carers to encourage their child

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

to complete the home learning tasks that are set and to ensure that they are provided with the sort of environment that allows them to do their best.

- Whilst it is important for pupils to develop their ability to work independently, it is also desirable that pupils have the opportunity to check their home learning with an adult each evening. It may be necessary to offer assistance but we recommend that questions are not answered for a child or a level of help provided which exceeds their own input. Where assistance is given, do not try to impose a method different to that which has been taught, since this can lead to confusion for the child.

- Parents and carers are asked to write a note in the home learning diary or link book to indicate if their child has experienced difficulty with the tasks that have been set or if they have been unable to complete it for a particular reason.

- If parents and carers have any questions about home learning, they should, in the first instance contact the child's class teacher. If their questions are of a more specific nature, they should contact the appropriate subject teacher or in the case of Years 1 & 2, the Head of Year/Department.

Holiday work and Absence

- If a child is too ill to attend school then the School will not provide any work or home learning.

- Home learning may sometimes be set during the school holidays (but should not be expected) so that skills and knowledge are not easily forgotten. The School does, however, encourage pupils to read regularly and practise number bonds and multiplication tables during these periods.

- Parents are urged not to take their children out of school during term time; work will not be provided for pupils who take periods of absence on such occasions.

Marking Procedures

Marking pupils' work is a fundamental part of the process of teaching and learning. It should demonstrate a respect for the work produced, give constructive feedback and indicate ways in which the individual can improve. It should involve the pupil to ensure they are involved in their learning and be age appropriate.

Staff are encouraged to distribute their time fairly by targeting a particular group of children for each week for one to one attention. In Early Years and Key Stage 1 the use of verbal feedback is used as part of developmental improvements; for older pupils, a tick, teacher's initial and date, can indicate that a piece of work has been discussed.

Teacher's comments – comments should be constructive and encouraging, any negative comment should always be supported by a statement on how to improve. Marking needs to be visible to the children but should not overpower their own work.

Teacher's marking – ticks where work is correct, crosses or a dot where mistakes are made

Marking partners – encourage children to proof-read by pairing them up to check each other's work. A list of points to consider should be visible in the classroom for guidance (see below)

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

Self-marking – where appropriate, pupils may self-mark to review their work using a variety of methods. All children must be encouraged to proof-read and self-correct before handing in any work. On the whole the latter is inappropriate for pupils below Year 2, but can have a place in Years 3 – 6. Generally it will be confined to short tests or number exercises and must always be monitored by the teacher. Children may also write or dictate comments evaluating a specific piece of their own work as identified by the teacher.

Oral group marking – in plenary sessions, groups of children's work may be marked orally. With older children it is appropriate to indicate such marking in the books e.g. "marked orally".

Shared marking – a common strength / error is shared with the whole class following the relevant lesson or test.

Targeted marking – good secure marking when done well is very effective. However, it can be very time consuming and it is therefore appropriate for teachers to mark more thoroughly, groups of children have to be targeted, whilst simply checking others' work and indicating this with a tick. Staff should ensure that any subject spelling is correct.

Frequency of marking

Marking may take place during the lesson which allows for immediate feedback through spoken responses and encouragement.

Other forms of response to children's work

Given the time constraints involved, a detailed response to every piece of work produced by every child is not always possible. There are other means available to encourage and motivate the child, such as:

- Share writing with a friend – read each other's pieces of work
- Read aloud to the class
- Read in Assembly
- Develop and expand the piece of work
- Make a final draft of 'best' work, taking into account any alterations - NB the teacher does not write on the final draft
- Display the work
- A piece of work could be copied onto paper during the handwriting period
- Use IT to 'Publish' and illustrate the work.

Special rewards

- Work may be displayed in the classroom, submitted to the Headteacher for special praise or read during Assembly
- Stickers, stamps, certificates and stars are also used
- House Points may be given to reward effort
- A comment may be written in the child's home diary for the parents to read
- Where a child or group of children display an outstanding quality, staff may recommend them to SMT for commendation.

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

Grades and Marks

Early Years and Key Stage 1 – Assessment is used to inform progress, planning and teaching. Regular observations, teacher assessment, internal test results and spelling or mental arithmetic checks may be used to monitor learning. Written and verbal feedback supports pupils in understanding their achievements and next steps.

Years 3-6 – Assessment is used to inform progress, planning and teaching across the curriculum. Written and verbal feedback supports pupils in understanding their achievements and next steps. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on and evaluate their own work, and achievement is measured against age-related expectations and individual progress.

Assessment Procedures – Day Nursery (BDNL) and Pre-Prep

BDNL	Term	Assessment Schedule
Over Two and Under Two Rooms	Michaelmas and Lent	Early Years Outcomes Tapestry Observations and Assessment

Year Group	Term	Assessment Schedule
Stepping Stones	Termly	Early Years Outcomes Tapestry Observations and Assessment
Reception	Termly	Baseline Assessments (Michaelmas for all Reception) Early Years Outcomes Tapestry Observations and Assessment PM Reading benchmark
	Trinity	As above, plus; Unaided writing task PUMA Early Years Outcomes (ELG's)

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

KS1	Termly	BST Spelling Phonics Screening PM Reading benchmark PIRA Unaided writing task PUMA
	Trinity	As above, plus; NPTE NPTM

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

Assessment Procedures – Prep

Assessment Procedures	Date	Assessment Schedule
Year 3 – Year 6	All year	Maths end of unit topic assessments (half termly), weekly spelling and mental arithmetic assessments; Science – ongoing Modular Assessment each half term
Michaelmas Term		
Year 3	September/October	Dyslexia Screening Programme, CAT 4 cognitive ability test
Year 6	September	CAT4 cognitive ability tests
Year 3 – Year 6	October	Progress in Reading Assessments (PIRA);
Year 3 – Year 6	November	Berkhamsted School Scholarship Assessments for Year 7 entry
Lent Term		
Year 3 – Year 6	February	Progress in Reading Assessments (PIRA)
Trinity Term		
Year 3 – Year 6	May	GL Progress Tests in English and Maths; Progress in Reading Assessments (PIRA)
Years 4, 5 and 6	May	GL Progress Tests in Science

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

Assessment Procedures – Heatherton

Assessments are made at the end of topics or units of work as appropriate and are included in the scheme of work for each subject. Standardised tests are as indicated in the table below.

Year Group / Term	Michaelmas	Lent	Trinity
Nursery	EYFS Assessment Record & Individual Learning Journeys Baseline Assessments at each entry point	EYFS Assessment Record & Individual Learning Journeys Baseline Assessments at each entry point	EYFS Assessment Record & Individual Learning Journeys Baseline Assessments at each entry point
Reception	As above plus Phonics Assessments	As above plus Phonics Assessments	As above plus Phonics Assessments
Year 1	Phonics Assessments PIRA and PUMA	Phonics Screening Assessments PIRA and PUMA	Phonics Screening Assessments PTE and PTM
Year 2	Phonics Assessments PIRA and PUMA	Phonics Screening Assessments PIRA and PUMA	Phonics Screening Assessments PTE and PTM
Year 3	Dyslexia Screening CATS assessments PIRA and PUMA	PIRA and PUMA	PTE and PTM
Year 4	CATS assessments PIRA and PUMA	PIRA and PUMA	PTE and PTM

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

Year 5	CATS assessments PIRA and PUMA	PIRA and PUMA	PTE and PTM
Year 6	Senior School Assessments CATS assessments PIRA and PUMA	PIRA and PUMA	PTE and PTM

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

Appendix 3 - Home Learning, Marking, and Assessment Procedures – Berkhamsted Senior Schools and Sixth Form

Home Learning

Home learning plays a significant role in encouraging pupils to become independent lifelong learners. It should aim to enrich their learning, to reinforce classwork, to prepare for classwork and extend their knowledge and understanding.

The Home learning timetable has been devised to ensure that pupils are given the opportunity to study independently, but also have time to develop extra-curricular interests, especially in the lower part of the Senior School. Home learning should be set regularly on Teams Assignments, as indicated on the timetable for each year group.

The number of home learning tasks allocated per night to each year group, and the timings, should be closely adhered to by pupils and staff:

Year 7	up to 3 subjects of up to 60 minutes in total
Year 8/9	up to 3 subjects of up to 75 minutes in total
Years 10/11	up to 3 subjects of up to 105 minutes in total (120 at the weekend)
Years 12/13	up to 5 hours per subject per week

Home learning during the school holidays should only be given to Years 11 to 13. Summer work is given to students entering Year 11, 12 and 13. Optional Summer work is given to students entering Year 10.
Pupils regularly spending more time than this should discuss it with their tutors.

Marking and Assessment

Our aim is to inform pupils, parents and pastoral staff about progress (in achievement and effort) and identify actions and behaviours required to make continual improvement.

Assessments should be handwritten by students if their final examinations are to be handwritten. This can either be done using the Surface stylus or pen and paper. If students have access arrangements which allow them to type their final examination, or if word processing is the Normal Way of Working, then they should use this method to complete all assessments in the relevant subject

Marking should:

- Have a positive tone, with helpful comments, indicating what pupils have achieved and how they might improve. Such *formative assessment for learning* should not have a mark on the work. In cases of practical and project work, marking should be staged.
- Be carried out regularly, according to departmental procedures and recorded in mark 'books' to provide information on which report grades can be based.

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

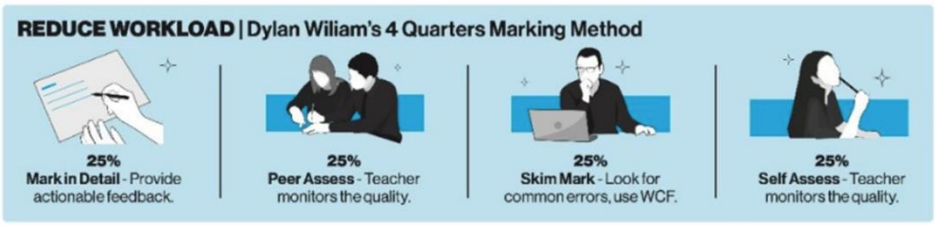
- Pupils should be expected to spell correctly and use grammar (re. Punctuation, Sentence Structure and Paragraphing) accurately. Errors should be highlighted at times. Poorly presented work should be returned to pupils to rewrite (but reasonable adjustments will be made for SEND pupils where appropriate).
- Provide teachers with information on how well pupils are learning, thereby informing future planning.
- Where peer group marking takes place, the work should be annotated by pupils.
- Where a summative assessment has been done, the resulting mark should clearly relate to achievement grades required for reports (see Appendix 4)

Assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching and may be:

- formative, giving pupils clear and understandable targets and feedback about their achievements
- summative, providing overall evidence of the achievements of what a pupil knows, understands and can do.

Principles of marking in Key Stage 3-5

- We believe that feedback is one of the most powerful tools for student progress. Our approach is informed by educational research and tailored to the realities of workload and subject variation.
- We are more interested in quality of feedback than the quantity of marking.
- Do not conduct 'tick and flick' marking.
- Qualitative marking need only contain one WWW and one EBI when marked.
- When marking/feedback is done well, every student should be able to tell you what they are working on and how they are trying to improve.
- Teachers are confident about each student's level of attainment and as a result, can report with accuracy and candour
- Live marking should be prioritised; immediate feedback is more powerful to address misconceptions than retrospective marking
- Merits/Golds should be awarded to acknowledge progress and engagement, rather than just for achievement.
- Not every single piece of homework needs to be marked by the teacher.
- There should be plenty of opportunity for self-reflection for each student. KS4 and KS5 students should have access to trackers to reflect on their progress (using WWW/EBI).
- At **KS3**, there should be a detailed piece of marking from the teacher at least every **four** weeks. This has been informed by Dylan William's research and work on 'four quarters marking' which colleagues may find helpful.
- At **KS4 and 5**, assessment schedules should be designed to enable students to develop and practise exam skills. Different subjects may vary (e.g., some subjects may engage in lengthy NEA work). As a rough outline, there should be marking in detail to provide actionable feedback at least every **three** weeks.



 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

Appendix 4 – Achievement Grades and Attitude to Learning Indicators

Senior Schools and Sixth:

Achievement grades

Achievement Grades are as follows:

- **Y7 - Y8**: Not yet meeting expectations, Currently meeting expectations, Currently exceeding expectations
- **Y9 - Y11:** 9-1
- **Y12-13**: A* to E for A level exams (A* should only be awarded sparingly in first term of Y12)

- In **Years 7 to 8**, the purpose of grading is to give pupils, parents, tutors, Heads of House and SMT a sense of a pupil's achievement relative to their own ability, using baseline data to help inform this judgement.
- Teachers need to make a judgement of current progress against the prediction generated by the MidYIS baseline data:
    - Not yet meeting expectations
    - Currently meeting expectations
    - Currently exceeding expectations

- In **Years 9 to 13** the grade awarded should be a **'working at' grade**. This should be a summative grade that shows current performance of the student in relation to the required standard for KS4 and KS5 final grades.

- For **Year 10 and Year 12**, where students are early in the key stage, there is also a **'Stretch' grade**. Teachers should be thinking ahead to how pupils will perform in public exams and, based on their previous experience of other similar pupils combined with the baseline score from MidYIS and ALIS, give an informed forecast of GCSE/A-level performance. The idea of the 'stretch' grade is that this assumes a strong work ethic and willingness to respond to feedback; hopefully this will enable teachers to help encourage students with the Stretch grade, whilst matching this with candour in the 'working at' grade.

- It is important to remember that Grades can change from one reporting cycle to the next. **Accurate** grades are required to enable pupils, parents and pastoral staff to take appropriate action and help guide pupils about progression to the next level of their education.

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

Attitude to Learning (AtL) Indicators

Indicator	Descriptor
****	You are proactive and consistently go beyond expectations. You are fully responsible for your own learning
***	You show initiative in your approach to your learning, often going beyond expectations to ensure that you are making progress
**	You sometimes take responsibility for your learning
*	You do not *yet* take responsibility for your learning

UCAS Reports

The Protocol for References and UCAS Grades will be sent to Y12 students towards in Trinity Term, at the same time as UCAS grades are issued.

Predicted grades should be:

- Based on objective data (GCSE//ALIS data) and professional judgement (following from past experience of students with similar profiles and their eventual result).

- As optimistic as possible, the objective being to help the students secure offers from their preferred degree courses. This should apply up to but not beyond the point at which the student's chances of securing the grade in question become negligible.

There may be occasions when a member of the Sixth Leadership Team will change a predicted grade. If this occurs, it will be in the broader context (not always available to a subject teacher or HOD) of the student's application and circumstances and may be qualified by the insistence that the applicant chooses only one or two courses that demand the higher tariff.

NB: UCAS grades will not be used as a metric to measure teacher performance.

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

Prep School Grades:

Achievement Grades Years 3-6

The following grade boundaries are used:

A Working above our expected level

B Working at our expected level

C Working towards our expected level

D Working below our expected level

Effort Grades Years 3-6

The following grade boundaries are used to collectively illustrate effort in classwork, home learning, attitude to learning and behaviour:

* Below our expectations

** Meets our expectations

*** Above our expectations

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

Heatherton Grades:

Maths and English attainment use summative data from tests and teacher judgement

Significantly above	Working above expected level	Working at expected level	Working below expected level	Working significantly below expected level

Effort:

Significantly exceeds expectations	Exceeds expectations	Meets expectations	Working towards expectations	Working significantly below expectations

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

Appendix 5 – Curriculum Overview

The tables below set out the number of minutes per week of teaching time for subjects in each of the Berkhamsted Schools:

Berkhamsted Prep and Pre-Prep

Subject	KS1 (Years 1&2)	Lower KS2 (Years 3&4)	Year 5	Year 6
English	400	300	300	300
Maths	300	300	300	300
Science	60	120	120	120
Humanities	60	120	120	120
French	40	60	60	60
Music - Year 1 - Year 2	40 70	60	60	60
PE, Games & Swimming	180	210	240	240
Art and Design & technology (Food & Nutrition Y5&6 only)	40	120	120	120
Computing	40	60	60	60
PSHE & RE	80 (40 + 40)	90	90	90
Drama		60	60	60

Heatherton

Subject	KS1 (Years 1&2)	Lower KS2 (Years 3&4)	Year 5	Year 6
English	320	300	300	300
Maths	300	300	300	300
Science	60	120	120	120
Humanities	160	180	180	180
French	40	60	120	120
Music	80	60	60	60
PE, Games & Swimming	180	210	210	210
Art and Design	60	110	110	110
Computing	60	60	60	60
PSHE	60	40	40	40
Drama		50	50	50
CATS		60	60	60
Form Time	190	210	160	160

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

Berkhamsted Senior School

Key Stage 3 – Years 7, 8 and 9

Subject	Y7	Y8	Y9
LINGUISTIC			
Latin	120	120	120
Spanish	120	120	120
French	120	120	120
Chinese			120 (2026-7 only)
Learning Edge			120
MATHEMATICAL			
Mathematics	200	180	180
Computer Science	60	60	60
SCIENTIFIC			
Integrated Science	160		
Biology		60	100
Physics		60	100
Chemistry		60	100
Technological			
Design Technology*	60 (2 terms)	60 (2 terms)	60
Food and Nutrition*	60 (1 term)	60 (1 term)	60
HUMAN & SOCIAL			
English	160	200	180
Geography	80	80	80
History	80	80	80
Religious Studies	80	80	80
Personal Development	40	40	40
Global Perspectives	40	40	
Library	40		
PHYSICAL			
PE / Games	240	240	200
CREATIVE			
Art and Design*	60	60	60
Drama*	60	60	60
Music*	60	60	60
* In Year 9 students select 4 of 5 options			

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

Key Stage 4 – Years 10 and 11

Subject	Y10	Y11
CORE SUBJECTS		
English	200	260
Mathematics	200	200
Personal Development	40	80
Learning Pathways* (not taken by those doing Additional Science)	80	140
OPTION SUBJECTS**		
LINGUISTIC		
Latin	160	140
Spanish	160	140
French	160	140
Chinese (Last Y10 entry: 2027-28)	160	140
MATHEMATICAL		
Computer Science	160	140
SCIENTIFIC		
Additional Science	360 + 40 Private Study	420
Biology	160	140
Physics	160	140
Chemistry	160	140
Technological		
Design Technology	160	140
Food and Nutrition	160	140
HUMAN & SOCIAL		
Geography	160	140
History	160	140
Religious Studies	160	140
Classical Civilisation (Last Y10 entry: 2026-27)	160	140
PE	160	140
CREATIVE		
Art and Design	160	140
Drama	160	140
Music	160	140

PHYSICAL		
Games	200	160
* Bespoke course to Berkhamsted (not resulting in a qualification)		

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026

** All students select 6 options from this list (Advanced Science counts as two options)	

Berkhamsted Sixth

Key Stage 5 – Years 12 and 13

Subject	Y12	Y13
A levels (and BTEC Sport)		
Art, Photography, DT, Drama	300	300
All other subjects	320	280
Maths and Further Maths combined	480	420
Subject 4*	160	160
Personal Development * A small number of Berkhamsted students study a 4th A level on reduced time	40	

 © Berkhamsted Schools Group 2026