



Brackenfield School
Prospectus



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Joe Masterson
Headteacher

A WARM WELCOME TO BRACKENFIELD SCHOOL

I am delighted you have picked up our prospectus because I am excited for you to learn about our school.

Founded in 1977, we have been Harrogate's Prep school for over 40 years. This is long enough for our school to witness the circle of life! We are now welcoming parents who were once pupils here themselves. Margie Sutcliffe, the founding Head, established a family ethos at Brackenfield that now lives on in perpetuity. More than anything else, children are happy and cared for here; we are an extended family.

Curriculum & Learning, Activities, Outdoor Learning and Community are the four areas of a powerful mission we use to focus our children's achievements. Our actions, behaviours and attitudes are underpinned by the core values of Kindness, Honesty, Respect, Confidence, Initiative and Perseverance. As a result, children are not only academically able, they are also confident and caring individuals who become proud ambassadors for their school and their community.

We aim to support you as well as your children by providing flexibility. Our wraparound care includes before and after school provision that can provide busy families with more opportunities within their own work and careers. This also provides the peace of mind that comes from knowing your children are happy and busy too. Holiday time clubs offer enriching activities during non-term times that may help meet your needs further. And finally, children can start in our popular Nursery from their second birthday, continuing until they become the leading pupils of the school in Year 6.

If you want to go one step better than reading our story in these pages or by checking our active social media presence, drop in to see us in person. Every day is an open day at Brackenfield. To visit our school is to truly feel our school; its warmth, vibrancy and friendliness. We have done our best to share our narrative here, but the real experience lies within. Contact the office or send us an email and we can arrange a call back, book you a tour, or prepare a taster day for your child. Our surrounding leafy trees make us look like we are hiding in a corner of beautiful Harrogate. Seek us out: we're here and we can't wait to meet you!

CURRICULUM AND LEARNING

We relentlessly focus on these three areas:

- It's important that we make sure our children love being in school and love to learn. Our classrooms and outdoor spaces are friendly and stimulating, and we are always on the lookout for how to run with children's interests and make lessons fun.
- We want to ensure our children can learn for themselves, can improve their skills, as well as knowing how to practise, set targets and continuously adapt. We are firm believers in promoting a growth mindset: there is always room to see our mistakes as opportunities to learn.
- Finally, we stand pupils on the shoulders of the giants that have gone before them. There is a lot to learn! Our broad curriculum draws on a deep well of knowledge, a vast array of skills set in meaningful contexts and is delivered by caring, inspiring and experienced staff.

While promoting innovation, creativity and use of technology, we don't put a ceiling on our learning and there are no walls to restrict it. We are underpinned by the English National Curriculum but that is only the start. From EYFS to Year 6, with class teachers and specialist teachers (French, Music, PE, and IT) all pupils are challenged in a supportive environment. When children enjoy their learning, know how to learn and are motivated to work hard they become prepared for, and excited by, all that school can offer.

“I wanted to take a short moment to relay my gratitude and heartfelt thanks to all the amazing Brackenfield staff (teaching and otherwise), that together have created an outstanding educational and supportive environment which my boy loves and enjoys so much.”

Year 6 Parent





“Children are encouraged to develop to their full potential and learn to become independent, confident, tolerant and caring individuals.”
Joe Masterson

INSTILLING A LIFELONG LOVE OF LEARNING

The curriculum at Brackenfield is broad and balanced. It is delivered by our professional staff in well-equipped classrooms. We have high expectations for our pupils and prepare them for their next schools through stimulating classwork and a range of enhancement activities that increase independence and leadership.

Small classes and individual attention encourage all children in the school to achieve their maximum potential. Any difficulties identified by the class teacher are discussed with parents and the child may be referred for tailored learning support to meet their needs. Specialist learning support staff work expertly with children to help them achieve their goals. Teachers also serve to extend the skills and knowledge of our most able pupils, to ensure they reach their full potential, particularly for scholarship applications.

Our size is truly our strength: we know every child in the school and can tailor the curriculum and learning to suit. This is one of the reasons we are so successful in getting children to their first choice senior schools and why so many of our children are awarded scholarships.



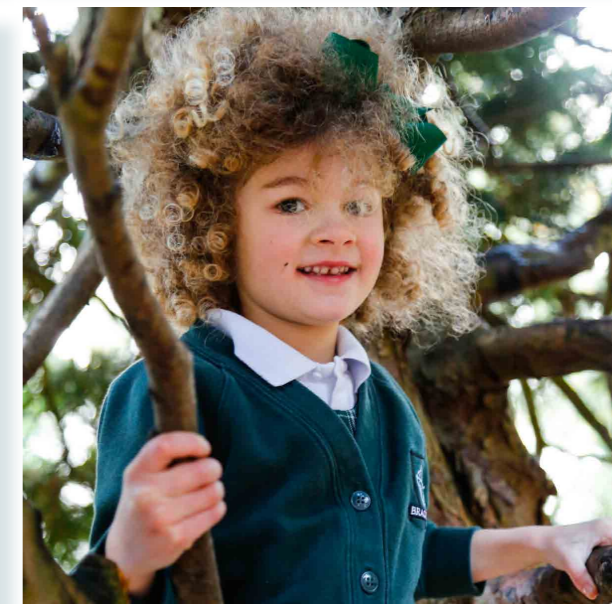
ACTIVITIES

In addition to our curriculum and strong focus on learning, our pupils are always 'up to something' (in a good way of course!). We're committed to providing pupils with opportunities to explore new interests, develop their strengths and pursue their passions. A vital part of a Brackenfield pupil experience is to become immersed in the performing arts, sport or various other enriching activities. It's also a wonderful way for children to get to know those from other year groups, and further instils our family ethos.

Collaboration, teamwork, friendship and shared goals work well for all our team sports, our orchestra and the highly entertaining performances we produce each year. Children enjoy a wide variety of activities including learning to play an instrument or preparing for speech and drama exams. Association with bodies like ABRSM and LAMDA help both to motivate and to recognise our children's many achievements.

Our team of peripatetic teachers offer a large range of instruments for one to one teaching, including cello, clarinet, saxophone, violin, guitar, drums and piano. We also have a singing teacher, and a speech and drama teacher. If pupils are looking for a talent, we can help them to find it. If they already have a talent, we can help them excel!

Our Extra Curricular Activities are always evolving in response to pupils' ideas and interests. Recent examples of ECAs include ballet, cricket, wildlife, gardening and yoga. We take part in local, regional and national competitions for curriculum, games, sport and music, and regularly come out on top. We try where possible to get children outdoors during their activities, and engage the local community wherever possible.



LEARNING OUTDOORS

While revelling in technology as a means to excite, ignite and redefine learning we also ensure a strong sense of balance is retained for our pupils towards human connection, nature and the outdoors. Understanding the outdoors encourages our pupils to be better stewards of the world; they develop respect and empathy while fostering ideas for sustainability.

Outdoor Education takes place both within and beyond our school site. We are lucky to be endowed with many leafy trees and specific outdoor learning areas on site.

We are even more fortunate to be within a short distance of the Yorkshire Dales, numerous national treasures and incredible natural landscapes close by. As proud promoters of the National Trust and through a close association with RHS Harlow Carr we seize opportunities to grow our own garden produce. Pupils take on experiential challenges in the outdoors that build resilience, collaboration, and leadership. This can take place in a Maths lesson, on the playground or on a trip to London.

“I really appreciate that outdoor learning is real and meaningful at Brackenfield. It is not just an add on, it's important. The region has so many fantastic outdoor opportunities and I'm delighted my children get to enjoy them!

Thank you.”
Year 1 Parent



COMMUNITY

Brackenfield School has a strong family ethos that has permeated our history. Family is at the heart of the school and this allows us to be united, friendly, safe and comforting. Empowered by these values our pupils reach out into the wider community both near and far. From Harrogate to Hong Kong we are all part of a global community.

We understand our place by developing a deep knowledge of the world around us through an ambitious curriculum. In addition to the National Curriculum, our pupils focus on the physical and human geography of one continent each year. Using IT we connect with schools in different parts of the world.

“We’ve felt really embraced by Brackenfield since starting at the school. Our son was a bit hesitant of the move from his old nursery but now loves the school and comes home every day bursting with stories. Thank you!”
Reception Parent

We understand our potential to serve and support our community through service and charity. What can we do to help? Our pupils investigate community links where we can as individuals, and as a school, support community projects. We also value the power of our kindness and determination to raise awareness and support for charity.

We understand, respect and embrace the diversity of our community through learning opportunities in our curriculum and our in behaviour outside of school.





COMPETITION AND COOPERATION

Sport plays a very important role in the curriculum for all age groups at Brackenfield. We are fortunate to have our own large playing fields across the road and the use of the Hydro, Harrogate's local indoor pool, enabling children to swim all year. Our experienced and dedicated games staff work closely with all pupils and motivate them to achieve their full potential. Each term they arrange and manage extremely busy fixture lists of competitive matches against other local schools.

At Brackenfield all children are encouraged to play with and compete against their classmates from an early age. All sports are played competitively in both single-sex and mixed matches where possible.

All children enjoy games and PE lessons where they develop their co-ordination, ball skills and general fitness. There is a dynamic programme of introduction to new sports and activities throughout the year to encourage children to try new skills and to keep healthy doing an activity they enjoy.

CREATIVITY AND EXPRESSION

Music, Drama and Art are important elements of the curriculum for all pupils at Brackenfield. The three departments frequently work closely together on productions of outstanding quality where the performances surpass all expectations for a small school.

There are many opportunities to perform in our orchestra, Junior or Senior choirs, recorder or percussion ensembles. Both formal and informal concerts are arranged throughout the year and children also perform in daily assemblies.

These activities help to give children the confidence they require to perform in public, which will be an invaluable asset during their school and working life.

Art at Brackenfield has always had a special place. Much of the colour around the corridors and classrooms is the result of the children's enthusiasm and hard work in the workshop. Walls throughout the school are graced with excellent examples of children's work.



NEXT STEPS

Our Year 6 pupils are repeatedly offered scholarship awards for Academics, Performing Arts & Drama, and Sports. Over the years, Brackenfield's Year 6 pupils are consistently offered places in their first-choice senior schools.

Our expertise, small size and close relationships with families puts us in an excellent position to prepare pupils for their chosen path. We can work individually with pupils to prepare them for any entrance exams or interviews they may need to take. Brackenfield pupils have a reputation in senior schools for being well-prepared and confident.

100%

of children moved on to their first choice senior school in 2020.

100%

success rate in scholarship applications in 2020.

6

Children were awarded first prize in the Harrogate Festival, for a range of performances including solo singing, group singing, and drama.

100%

Achieved outstanding results in ABRSM grade exams through individual instrumental lessons.

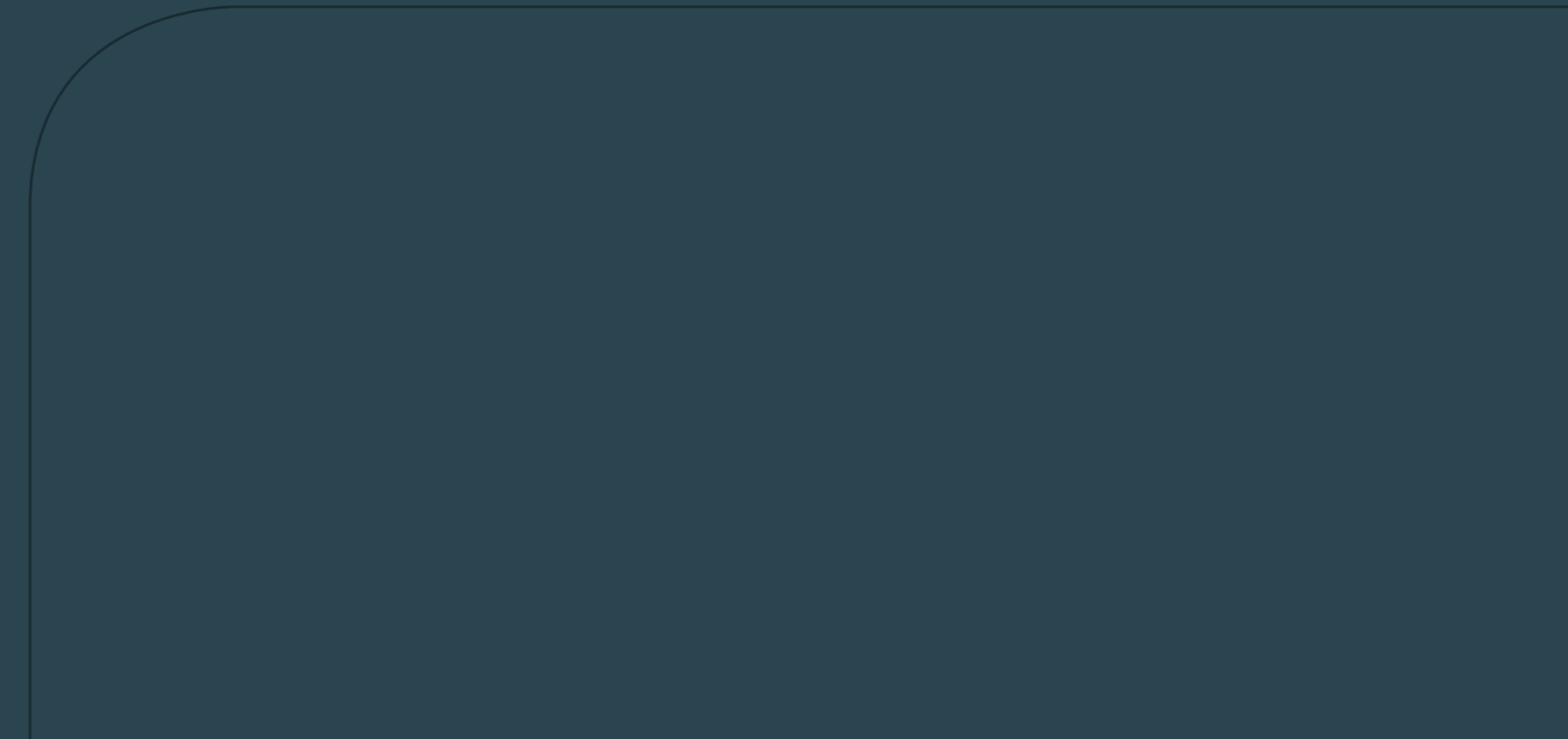
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

Life at Brackenfield is focused on happy children and an excellent, well-resourced education where children are excited to come to school in the morning and bursting to tell their families about their day when they get home. We believe that children learn best when there is a clear and effective partnership between parents, the child and the school. Building relationships through our engagement and communication with parents is key from each child's first day at Brackenfield.

Whilst there are regular scheduled meetings for parents to discuss their child's progress with teachers, our doors are always open for parents to come into school and discuss progress or concerns. The positive relationships fostered between children, teachers and support staff is a strength of our school and close contact with class teachers is actively encouraged.

“Thank you for everything the school has been doing during these turbulent times. We have been amazed at the level of care put into the online learning.”
Year 3 Parent







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