



# **Bramble Brae School**

## **School Information Handbook**

**Session 2018-2019**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of our handbook is to welcome you to Bramble Brae School and provide you with as much information as we possibly can within a relatively brief document about the organisation, facilities, ethos, values and policies of our school. Most importantly, a school handbook can only ever offer an introduction to the work of any school – if you have any other questions remaining about Bramble Brae and what it sets out to do in partnership with parents, carers and the local community – then just ask. We will be delighted at any time to respond to individual queries, concerns or requests for additional information.

The information within this booklet is accurate at the time of writing but is liable to change either during the current session or over future years.

The school website ([www.bramblebrae.aberdeen.sch.uk](http://www.bramblebrae.aberdeen.sch.uk)) and our social media sites display a huge amount of additional information about the school, including many photographs of classes and groups of pupils at work. There is also now a strong element of “blogging” included within our site. Class and individual pupil contributions are now updated regularly which makes it the best way to keep up to date with what is happening in the school. Please take some time to log on to the website to have a look and take the opportunity to leave comments on the posts if you can.

## **THE SCHOOL CONTEXT**

Bramble Brae School serves part of Northfield in Aberdeen. Over the last two school sessions, our P1 – 7 roll has varied between 151 and 183. At the time of writing, our forecast roll for August 2018 is 181. Additionally, we continue to offer a further 40 pupil places within our nursery which is fully subscribed with a substantial waiting list and good attendance. Bramble Brae pupils (P1 – 7) are drawn from the school's own defined catchment zone. Additionally, a significant number of pupils presently attend Bramble Brae School who are zoned to other schools across the wider Northfield area.

Bramble Brae is a compact, adapted nursery/infant building constructed originally in the early 1950s and converted to an "all-through" school around 1980. The building is located around one third of the way down Cummings Park Drive, fairly centrally within the Northfield area of Aberdeen and within a quarter of a mile of Northfield Academy itself. Over 2017/2018, approximately 75% of our pupils were "in zone." The remaining 25% of pupils were enrolled at Bramble Brae as a result of parental placing requests. However, it should be underlined that the pattern of pupil enrolments across the wider Northfield area is fairly complex, with significant numbers of pupils attending primary schools other than that which they are zoned to attend.

Over recent school years, Aberdeen City Council has provided teaching and classroom support staff to primary schools which takes full account of Scottish Index of Multi-Deprivation (SIMD) figures. Over 2017/2018, Bramble Brae had the fourth highest SIMD index score of any primary school in the city. Accordingly, in any terms, our school was well-staffed over the session with a complement of head teacher, principal teacher, 9 class teachers, 1 teacher of nursery, 2 teachers (1.5 F.T.E. in total) offering targeted support inputs across the school. We also appointed a music teacher and a PE teacher who are in school two days each. The pupils and teachers of Bramble Brae were also supported by 10 Pupil Support Assistants (9.0 F.T.E. in total) operating within all classrooms. Our PSA team also provides supervision of children at school lunches and over breaks. We also had two Early Years Practitioners (2.0 F.T.E.), school administrator and school support assistant. Additionally, a number of Bramble Brae pupils received instrumental tuition on recorder and brass instruments. Our school presently has part-time janitorial provision.

Over school year 2017/2018, despite staffing shortages across the city, there has been considerable consistency provided to Bramble Brae pupils in terms of school staffing. Where there has been any significant staff absence, cover has been provided from a small core of well-qualified and well-suited staff who have been fully committed to the work of our school.

## **CONTACT DETAILS**

School Name: Bramble Brae Primary School  
Address: Cummings Park Drive  
Aberdeen  
AB16 7BL

Telephone Number: 01224 692618  
Fax Number: 01224 699855  
E-mail: [bramblebrae@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:bramblebrae@aberdeencity.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.bramblebrae.aberdeen.sch.uk](http://www.bramblebrae.aberdeen.sch.uk)

## **Visiting The School**

Any parent/carer or prospective parent/carer is always welcome to visit and tour Bramble Brae School at any time. We do prefer that an appointment is made as we like to spend quality time guiding new families and children around our school. Tours invariably offer the opportunity to meet and talk with pupils, a range of staff (teaching and support) and parents/volunteers actively engaged in the work of the school.

## **Contacting The School Regarding Routine Matters Or Any Other Concerns**

Our school office team is most usually the point of initial contact for anyone telephoning or calling in person at the school. Very often, our office team is able to deal with routine enquiries immediately, but they also always endeavour to keep the head teacher or delegate informed of these matters of routine contact over the course of the day. Our school telephone is usually answered from 7.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. daily, and for that reason Bramble Brae does not use any answering service at the present time. If any member of our school community wishes to talk with the head teacher or principal teacher on the telephone, this can usually be arranged very quickly indeed. (If management members are available, the call will be taken immediately). When families associated with the school request a face-to-face appointment, our target is always to make that happen if at all possible within that same school day. We see providing information to parents/carers and responding to their enquiries and day-to-day needs as one of our principal functions as a school at the heart of its community.

## **Pupil Absence**

It is absolutely essential that families contact our school office if pupils are absent from school that day. A regular update from parents/carers regarding any likely return date is also extremely helpful for the school. The present Bramble Brae arrangement is that from around 9.30 a.m. one of our office team begins to telephone any individual families where a child has not arrived in school and where no parent/carer contact to indicate absence has been

made. In order to ensure that this step needs to be taken as few times as possible, it is essential that families contact the school between 7.30 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. when children will be absent from school. These same procedures should also be followed when a pupil is to be absent for scheduled medical or other family-related appointments. If any pupil is taken ill over lunchtime at home or if an afternoon medical appointment is suddenly remembered it is essential that you advise our school office immediately families realise that a pupil will not be returning to school for the afternoon. Both attendance and punctuality are monitored closely by the school.

### **Complaint Procedures**

Virtually all parental and stakeholder concerns/complaints are resolved at school level. However, if any parent/carer remains dissatisfied with a particular outcome, then they can first raise their concern(s) with the Aberdeen City Council Quality Improvement Officer (QIO) who supports our school. Our office team can straightforwardly provide up-to-date contact details in this direction on request.

If any parents/carers then still feel that their concern/complaint has not been satisfactorily dealt with, then the Ombudsman has the power to investigate complaints against Aberdeen City Council in relation to maladministration and service failure.

This includes the power to investigate maladministration in the internal organisation and management of schools.

The Ombudsman does not have the power to investigate professional education matters i.e. the giving of instruction, conduct, curriculum or discipline in any educational establishment under the management of Aberdeen City Council.

### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

#### **Opportunities For Parents/Carers To Be Involved In The School**

Bramble Brae sets out to involve parents/carers and members of the wider family in the everyday life of the school in every way that we possibly can. We have a genuine “open door policy,” and in that context all are genuinely welcome to call at the school. Other opportunities available to parents/carers include regular invitations for adults to share pupil learning within classrooms (sometimes the focus is on seeing “in action” everyday learning opportunities for children; sometimes events have included special opportunities for adults and children to learn together).

Bramble Brae is always looking for volunteers to assist the work of the school, and opportunities available in this direction can include regular “blocked” involvement alongside particular stages, working alongside specific pupil groups (eg., nursery garden volunteers or assisting with the running of extra curricular school programmes). We are always looking for parent/carer

support for a whole range of school visits, and very many family members have become involved in this direction over recent sessions.

During session 2017/2018 we re-established the Parent Voice Group. The Parent Voice group represents and acts on behalf of the parent forum at Bramble Brae and all parents/carers are automatically members of the parent forum. They will meet formally approximately once per month to discuss how to best support the work of the school and to organise fundraising events and activities. Our Parent Council works in partnership with pupils, staff, the head teacher and Aberdeen City Council in order to represent and develop the interests of Bramble Brae School. If you are interested in joining our Parent Voice Group at some point in the future, do not hesitate to get in touch with the school office where you will be provided with the names of current Parent Council members and advised as to how you may make contact with them.

As well as having many opportunities to become involved in supporting the work of class/pupil groups and the school as a whole, there are, of course, clear opportunities for parents/carers to become involved directly in detailed discussions around the education of their own child.

Families are welcome to contact the school at any time in order to discuss general or specific areas of pupil progress, support provided to their son/daughter within learning contexts or any other area of learning/teaching where clarification is sought. We will initiate contact with families too where Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are being updated/reviewed as part of the Child's Plan, or in any other school situations where it is proposed that the support provided to a youngster may change in any significant way. We are also very conscious of the need to support families and pupils closely at key points of transition (eg., nursery to P1, P7 to S1, etc.).

## **SCHOOL ETHOS**

### **Culture, Values and Aspirations for our Pupils**

At Bramble Brae, we believe that the extremely supportive culture of our school and its everyday positive and happy working climate combine to provide the single most important "building block" in our task of continuing to be a school of quality which truly serves its community. We set out to support not only the pupils who attend our school but their families too. In order to provide this support for families, we will always do everything that we possibly can in all circumstances. For the pupils in our day-to-day care, we always aim for them to achieve the best that they possibly can; our targets for children (nursery through to P7) are always aspirational but always realistic too and in line with the abilities of each individual pupil. The development and maintenance of a positive self-image for every one of our children is at the core of everything that we do at Bramble Brae.

Although we do focus very considerably on developing traditional pupil skills in the key areas of literacy and numeracy, a very broad curriculum is in place at Bramble Brae and great importance is attached to wider pupil achievements. Pupil interests and achievements are marked through weekly

assemblies and a whole range of other in-school celebrations, (annual “Friendship Award” ceremony, Responsible Citizen certificate presentations throughout the year, annual “Positive Behaviour” bike raffle, etc.).

We believe strongly that extra curricular activity is an important part of educating our pupils. Bramble Brae staff are hugely committed in this direction and opportunities for pupil involvement “out of hours” are manifold. We feel that our extra curricular programme is second to none, and the following activities have been arranged for pupils over recent sessions:

- Girls’ Football
- Basketball
- Traditional Music
- Cross Country and Athletics
- Choir
- Library
- Craft Club
- “Stay and Play”
- Run, Jump and Throw
- Homework Club
- Scottish Country Dancing
- Badminton
- Science Club
- Kit Car
- Drama
- Dance
- Art Attack
- Kindle E-Books
- “Bikeability”
- Yoga
- Gardening Club
- Zumba

### **Bramble Brae Vision, Values and Aims**

Our new school Vision, Values and Aims were established in 2017 following a large scale review.

Our motto at Bramble Brae School is **‘Belonging, Believing, Achieving’** which underpins our culture, ethos and values.

#### **Vision**

At Bramble Brae School we aspire to work together to promote a culture of belonging, mutual respect and lifelong learning. We want to create a happy, safe and motivating environment which encourages our children to be aspirational for their future.

## **Values**

Our core values are those of:

- Respect
- Nurture
- Honesty
- Compassion
- Inclusion
- Equity

## **Aims**

- To ensure a happy, safe and nurturing environment
- To provide an engaging and exciting curriculum unique to our context
- To develop successful learners in and beyond the school
- To be ambitious in all that we do
- To include everyone in the life of the school

## **Promoting Positive Behaviour At Bramble Brae**

Our school has a clear written policy for positive behaviour management. The clear guidelines within this policy ensure that all staff and pupils know exactly what is expected of them on a day-to-day basis in creating a learning environment that is safe, secure and conducive to the wellbeing of all. Staff at Bramble Brae will always lead by positive example and provide a good behaviour model for pupils at all times in their interactions with children and adults around the school. Working closely with parents/carers is at the very heart of Bramble Brae approaches to managing pupil behaviour, and although most matters concerning everyday pupil conduct can be dealt with easily within the school, parents/carers will be asked to become involved at an early stage when matters are a little more serious and when home and school need to work closely together.

At the very centre of our positive behaviour management policy are our Rights Respecting School charters which are developed by each individual class. They are based on the articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). If any parent/carer wishes a copy of our positive behaviour management policy in full, then please simply contact our school office.

At Bramble Brae, we set out to motivate pupils by involving them as much as possible in the operation of the school. We have established Pupil Participation groups which all pupils have the opportunity to be part of. The current groups are Community, Eco-Schools, Fairtrade and Global Citizenship, Health, Pupil Council and Right Respecting Schools. The school has achieved Silver level of the Eco Schools Award and are working towards Green Flag status. We are aiming to become a FairTrade School, having already achieved our Fair Aware and Fair Active awards. We are working towards Silver level of the Rights Respecting Schools Award.

## **The School's Role in the Community**

Our school looks out into the local Cummings Park and wider Northfield community in every way that it possibly can. Links with local Community Learning and Development services are strong with a particular focus over recent years being joint working with Cummings Park Community Centre and the community flat located at the foot of Cummings Park Drive. Links with senior citizens and supported residential accommodation within our area are very well formed too, and Bramble Brae pupils are regular visitors to both "Hamewith" and Granitehill House. Through an intergenerational project, excellent links have been developed with Silver City Surfers and we continue to look for innovative and exciting ways to further develop this link. We have an ongoing link with the Cummings Park Community Centre where we are developing a garden area that all pupils are able to access and participate in outdoor learning. Through this link the school is involved in a variety of joint community projects. Associated School Group (A.S.G.) links across the wider Northfield area are excellent, this having been the case for many years. Bramble Brae works closely with Northfield Academy and all area primary schools throughout each academic year. Links with local or locally owned businesses have also been formed and maintained over the years.

## **Links with Denominational Bodies**

Bramble Brae pupils study the importance of faith and belief in the context of all major world religions, but regular ongoing links exist with Middlefield Parish Church (Church of Scotland), Fountain Hall Church (New Testament Church based in Aberdeen) and Fernielea Gospel Hall. If any Bramble Brae family would wish their son/daughter to be withdrawn from occasions of religious observance (visits involving a school chaplain to Bramble Brae, visits to the local parish church, etc.), then this can be straightforwardly arranged. Please simply contact the head teacher in order to discuss any wishes you may have in this direction.

## **THE CURRICULUM**

### **Curriculum For Excellence (CfE)**

In 2009, new curriculum guidelines for "Curriculum for Excellence" (CfE) were published and since the school has worked quickly and effectively to ensure that it is embedded. At Bramble Brae, we have worked closely with officers from Aberdeen City Council to provide a curriculum which best suits the national agenda but which also takes full account of the needs of the individual pupils presently attending Bramble Brae.

One of the most exciting features of the curriculum is that it is designed to give pupils real choice around what they learn in school and allows them to be involved in a meaningful way in planning programmes of work for themselves and classmates. Another very important feature of CfE is that “active learning” (learning through doing) is at the forefront of pupil experience and a great emphasis is placed on this.

If pupils now have a key role in planning and choosing their own learning experiences within CfE, then it is an absolutely core responsibility of teachers and senior leadership team to ensure full coverage of **all** relevant “Experiences” and “Outcomes” (“Es and Os”) through the topics and mini-topics chosen for study.

The next few pages set out to capture broadly what pupils will experience across all aspects of the curriculum during their time at primary school. (These descriptors for each area of the curriculum are taken directly from CfE documentation provided by Scottish Government).

If you would like to see exactly how Bramble Brae teachers and support staff have prioritised the development of CfE at school level, then simply enquire at the school and we will provide any interested parent/carer with the latest version of our Bramble Brae School Improvement Plan. All Scottish schools are also expected to produce an annual Standards and Quality report which summarises for all stakeholders progress made in terms of the previous year’s school improvement plan, the main achievements of the school over the preceding twelve months and information about how the school and its pupils are performing. A paper copy of Bramble Brae’s most recent Standards and Quality report can be obtained simply by calling at the school office, but it is also available online at:

<http://www.bramblebrae.aberdeen.sch.uk/>

### **Literacy and English**

The development of literacy skills plays an important role in all learning.

I develop and extend my literacy skills when I have opportunities to:

- communicate, collaborate and build relationships
- reflect on and again explain my literacy and thinking skills, using feedback to help me improve and sensitively provide useful feedback for others
- engage with and create a wide range of texts in different media, taking advantage of the opportunities offered by ICT
- develop my understanding of what is special, vibrant and valuable about my own and other cultures and their languages
- explore the richness and diversity of language, how it can affect me and the wide range of ways in which I and others can be creative?
- extend and enrich my vocabulary through listening, talking, watching and reading.

In developing my English language skills:

- I engage with a wide range of texts and am developing an appreciation of the richness and breadth of Scotland's literacy and linguistic heritage
- I enjoy exploring and discussing word patterns and text structures.

### **Numeracy and Mathematics**

My learning in mathematics enables me to:

- develop a secure understanding of the concepts, principles and processes of mathematics and apply these in different contexts, including the world of work
- engage with more abstract mathematical concepts and develop important new kinds of thinking
- understanding the application of mathematics, its impact on our society past and present, and its potential for the future
- develop essential numeracy skills which will allow me to participate fully in society
- establish firm foundations for further specialist learning
- understanding that successful independent living requires financial awareness, effective money management, using schedules and other related skills
- interpret numerical information appropriately and use it to draw conclusions, assess risk, and make reasoned evaluations and informed decisions
- apply skills and understanding creatively and logically to solve problems, within a variety of contexts
- appreciate how the imaginative and effective use of technologies can enhance the development of skills and concepts.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

Learning in health and wellbeing ensures that children and young people develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future.

Each establishment, working with partners, should take a holistic approach to promoting health and wellbeing, one that takes account of the stage of growth, development and maturity of each individual, and the social and community context.

I can expect my learning environment to support me to:

- develop my self-awareness, self worth and respect for others
- meet challenges, manage change and build relationships
- experience personal achievement and build my resilience and confidence
- understand and develop my physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing and social skills
- understand how what I eat, how active I am and how decisions I make about my behaviour and relationships affect my physical and mental wellbeing

- participate in a wide range of activities which promote a healthy lifestyle
- understand that adults in my school community have a responsibility to look after me, listen to my concerns and involve others where necessary
- learn about where to find help and resources to inform choices
- assess and manage risk and understand the impact of risk-taking behaviour
- reflect on my strengths and skills to help me make informed choices when planning my next steps
- acknowledge diversity and understand that it is everyone's responsibility to challenge discrimination.

## **Social Studies**

Learning in the social studies will enable me to:

- develop my understanding of the history, heritage and culture of Scotland, and an appreciation of my local and national heritage within the world
- broaden my understanding of the world by learning about human activities and achievements in the past and present
- develop my understanding of my own values, beliefs and cultures and those of others
- develop my understanding of the principles of democracy and citizenship through experiences of critical and independent thinking
- explore and evaluate different types of sources and evidence
- learn how to locate, explore and link periods, people and events in time and place
- learn how to locate, explore and link features and places locally and further afield
- engage in activities which encourage enterprising attitudes
- develop an understanding of concepts that stimulate enterprise and influence business
- establish firm foundations for lifelong learning and for further specialised study and careers.

## **Sciences**

The sciences framework provides a range of different contexts for learning which draw on important aspects of everyday life and work.

Learning in the sciences will enable me to:

- develop curiosity and understanding of the environment and my place in the living, material and physical world
- demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of the big ideas and concepts of the sciences
- develop skills for learning, life and work
- develop the skills of scientific inquiry and investigation using practical techniques
- develop skills in the accurate use of scientific language, formulae and equations

- apply safety measures and take necessary action to control risk and hazards
- recognise the impact the sciences make on my life, the lives of others, the environment and on society
- recognise the role of creativity and inventiveness in the development of the sciences
- develop an understanding of the Earth's resources and the need for responsible use of them
- express opinions and make decisions on social, moral, ethical, economic and environmental issues based upon sound understanding
- develop as a scientifically-literate citizen with a lifelong interest in the sciences
- establish the foundation for more advanced learning and future careers in the sciences and the technologies.

### **Technologies**

The technologies framework provides a range of different contexts for learning that draw on important aspects of everyday life and work.

It includes creative, practical and work-related experiences and outcomes in business, computing science, food, textiles, craft, design, engineering, graphics and applied technologies.

Learning in the technologies enables me to:

- develop an understanding of the role and impact of technologies in changing and influencing societies
- contribute to building a better world by taking responsible, ethical actions to improve my life, the lives of others and the environment
- gain the confidence and skills to embrace and use technologies now and in the future, at home, at work and in the wider community
- become an informed consumer and producer who has an appreciation of the merits and impacts of products and services
- be capable of making reasoned choices relating to the environment, sustainable development and ethical, economic and cultural issues
- broaden my understanding of the role that information and communications technology (ICT) has in Scotland and in the global community
- broaden my awareness of how ideas in mathematics and science are used in engineering and the technologies
- experience work-related learning, and establish firm foundations for lifelong learning, and specialised study and careers.

It is important to remember that as children and young people play and learn they will develop an interest, confidence and enjoyment in ICT skills that can be transferred and applied in different learning contexts.

## **Expressive Arts**

Experiences in the expressive arts involve creating and presenting and are practical and experiential. Evaluating and appreciating are used to enhance enjoyment and develop knowledge and understanding.

My learning in, through and about the expressive arts:

- enables me to experience the inspiration and power of the arts
- recognises and nurtures my creative and aesthetic talents
- allows me to develop skills and techniques that are relevant to specific art forms and across the four capacities
- provides opportunities for me to deepen my understanding of culture in Scotland and the wider world
- is enhanced and enriched through partnerships with professional arts companies, creative adults and cultural organisations.

## **Religious and Moral Education**

Learning through religious and moral education enables me to:

- recognise religion as an important expression of human experience
- learn about and from the beliefs, values, practices and traditions of Christianity and the world religions selected for study, other traditions and viewpoints independent of religious belief
- explore and develop knowledge and understanding of religions, recognising the place of Christianity in the Scottish context
- investigate and understand the responses which religious and non-religious views can offer to questions about the nature and meaning of life
- recognise and understand religious diversity and the importance of religion in society
- develop respect for others and an understanding of beliefs and practices which are different from my own
- explore and establish values such as wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity and engage in the development of and reflection upon my own moral values
- develop my beliefs, attitudes, values and practices through reflection, discovery and critical evaluation
- develop the skills of reflection, discernment, critical thinking and deciding how to act when making moral decisions
- make a positive difference to the world by putting my beliefs and values into action
- establish a firm foundation for lifelong learning, further learning and adult life.

## **ASSESSMENT**

Bramble Brae School now makes full use of an electronic tracking system to record and assess pupil progress. The head teacher and/or principal teacher presently meet with class teachers on at least four occasions each school year in order to discuss individual pupil progress and “next steps” for each child. Any significant changes proposed for a pupil following these termly tracking meetings (eg., additional support for learning/pupil support teacher inputs, the involvement of our educational psychologist, speech and language therapy referral, etc) will always be discussed first with parents/carers. Pupils are also very much involved in setting their own personal learning targets.

In order to support teacher judgement around where each individual child is in terms of their own learning and achievement of CfE levels, Bramble Brae staff use a whole range of diagnostic measurement tools and other short tests. At the present time, these include SNSA at P1, P4 and P7, the “PM Benchmark Kit” (Nelson Thornes) and GL reading assessments.

## **REPORTING**

Bramble Brae produces a detailed written report for every child (N – P7) in May each year. These reports describe pupil progress within all areas of the curriculum and also provide updated information for families in terms of social/emotional development in all school contexts. The distribution of these reports is followed closely by an opportunity for parents/carers to meet with their child’s class teacher in order to discuss any areas of the report in more detail as required. There is also an opportunity much earlier in the Bramble Brae annual calendar for parents/carers to meet with teachers in order to discuss pupil progress. These initial consultation meetings take place in November each year. There is no accompanying written report at this point in the year, but there is an excellent opportunity for families and school staff to discuss how an individual child has settled into a new class group and/or new teacher. There will also be less formal opportunities throughout the school year where the focus will be on learning journeys and pupils sharing their learning with parents/carers.

Whilst recognising that these slightly more formal opportunities can be very valuable indeed, from my perspective as head teacher of the school I feel that I do need to emphasise the comparable importance of the idea that parents/carers can always meet with any member of our staff team at any point in the school year. All families at Bramble Brae soon realise that we operate a genuine “open door” policy at the school, and although an appointment will sometimes be required, parents/carers can always meet with staff as any need arises.

## **PUPIL TRANSITIONS**

### **Moving From Early Years Learning To Primary School**

Pupils within Bramble Brae nursery are an integral part of everyday life within our school. In order to make everyday use of facilities within the school, nursery pupils move regularly throughout the building and gradually meet more and more pupils from other stages of the school. As well as these less formal opportunities to meet with other Bramble Brae pupils, there are also more formal “buddying” activities arranged and senior pupils often act as “nursery helpers” across a variety of contexts. At Bramble Brae we see cross-stage working as a very important part of social development for the pupils in our care.

When children join our school at P1 (or indeed join our pre-school nursery group having attended an ante pre-school year elsewhere) we always try to liaise as closely as possible with the previous provider whether that be private sector provision, a partner provider or local authority provision within another school setting. Wherever possible, we will try to organise a visit to the earlier provider by Bramble Brae staff so that we can see any new pupil operating within their previous setting.

### **Moving From Class to Class Within Our School in August Each Year**

Bramble Brae is a relatively small school and our general approach to working with pupils is such that they are highly likely to know most staff fairly well. It is likely too that they will already have worked with their new teacher previously in some learning and teaching situation. However, in the month of June we always arrange a “meet your new teacher” classroom session for all pupils already within our school.

### **Moving From Other Primary Schools (Or Other Educational Systems Outwith Scotland or the UK) To Bramble Brae At Any Point In The School Year**

It is our target to make any new pupils joining our school and their families feel “at home” at Bramble Brae as quickly as possible. In our view, a key part of this is a full guided tour of the school for all families prior to enrolment and a full opportunity to discuss the work of the school and ask any questions.

### **Transition To Secondary School**

All pupils zoned for Bramble Brae Primary School are also zoned for Northfield Academy. (Please note that if a pupil attends Bramble Brae as an “out of zone” application and/or “a placing request,” it is quite possible that they are not zoned for Northfield Academy. If you would wish to check the status of your home address in this respect, then please simply contact our school office).

Transition arrangements with Northfield Academy are highly effective. Our P7 pupils are regular visitors to the academy over the course of their P6 and P7 years and a special “transition teacher” based at the academy visits Bramble Brae and the other primary schools in our area on a regular basis over their final two years at primary school.

Northfield Academy is always keen to hear from families who are considering enrolling their son/daughter there for their secondary school years, and the contact details are as follows:

School Name: Northfield Academy  
Address: Granitehill Place,  
Aberdeen  
AB16 7AU  
Telephone Number: 01224-699715  
Fax Number: 01224-685239  
E-mail: [northfieldacademy@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:northfieldacademy@aberdeencity.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.northfield.aberdeen.sch.uk](http://www.northfield.aberdeen.sch.uk)

If any family wishes to make a placing request for a secondary school other than that for which they are formally zoned, then the necessary forms to make this placing request must be submitted on or before 15<sup>th</sup> March if attendance the following August is planned. More information on this process is available to families through the following Aberdeen City Council website link:

[http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/education\\_learning/schools/sch\\_school\\_placing\\_request.asp](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/education_learning/schools/sch_school_placing_request.asp)

Once a placing request has been granted in respect of any other secondary school in Aberdeen or elsewhere in Scotland, the UK or Europe, Bramble Brae will liaise closely with that school in the best possible interests of a transferring pupil.

### **SUPPORT FOR PUPILS**

In line with the level of staffing provided to Bramble Brae through the current Aberdeen City Council primary staffing formula, we are well placed to meet the needs of most pupils who attend our school. Within the school we have teachers who deliver additional support for pupils beyond the teaching inputs provided to them by their class teacher. Additionally there are a number of specialist services who visit Bramble Brae regularly in order to provide specific inputs for particular pupils and groups.

The Authority is committed to inclusion and the Presumption of Mainstreaming, as set out in the Standards in Scotland’s Schools Act 2000.

It is the aspiration of the Education and Children’s Services to utilise its resources and expertise to ensure that almost all children can be supported in their learning within their local school. This will be a gradual change which

will ensure, where possible, that children will no longer have to travel away from friends and family to access the support they need.

All primary and secondary schools can already provide interventions for children and young people with additional support needs. Schools can access expertise from a range of specialist services including Educational Psychology, Sensory Support, English as an Additional Language and Autism Outreach. A very small number of children may require access to a more specialised provision for a period of time or access to a Special School Placement. As a parent or carer you will be fully involved in decisions about your child, your views are invaluable in helping us design appropriate supports.

Schools operate a staged approach to supporting learner. The Staged Intervention Framework is used to help identify potential barriers to learning and participation, and plan effectively. If your child is recognised as being in need of targeted support, a Child's Plan will be put in place. Parents, pupils and agencies supporting your child will help develop and review the plan to make sure that it is supporting your child.

**Levels of support** within the Staged Intervention Framework are categorised as follows:

**Universal support** is the support delivered by the class teacher through effective differentiation. When appropriate the class teacher will be guided by other professionals in school with particular expertise.

**Targeted support** is the support delivered by the class teacher and other school staff. When appropriate, support will be provided by support services across Education and Children's Services.

**Specialist/Multi-agency support** is the support delivered by the school and others, which is likely to be highly individualised. Support will be planned and co-ordinated through the development of a Child's Plan that may be multi-agency in nature.

Support given may be short term or longer term, but will be reviewed on a regular basis to make sure your child is making good progress.

### **Getting it Right for Every Child**

Getting it Right for Every Child is the Scottish Government's policy that aims to make sure that all babies, children and young people are supported to reach their full potential by maximising their wellbeing.

The policy is based on a number of core principles and values. In Aberdeen it is being delivered through a shared approach where all the community partners work together to support children and/or their family as soon as a need is identified.

In order to make sure children receive the appropriate help, every child now has the “Named Person” based in either health or education. The “Named Person” will be the first point of contact when a child, young person or their family/carers wish to access support or advice. If the child requires support of more than two services the “Lead Professional” will be appointed to co-ordinate the support.

Further information on Getting it Right for Every Child in Aberdeen can be found on the website. [www.aberdeengettingitright.org.uk/GIRFEC.html](http://www.aberdeengettingitright.org.uk/GIRFEC.html)

If at any time during your child’s time at Bramble Brae you would wish to ask any questions or take further advice around the support offered to your son/daughter, then please simply arrange an appointment with the head teacher by contacting the school. Any further discussion with key staff who support your child can then be easily arranged.

### **INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO FAMILIES AROUND PERFORMANCE AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

As already stated earlier within this school handbook, the current Bramble Brae Standards and Quality Improvement Plan is available online through our main school website. A paper copy can also be obtained readily through the school office. In addition to providing families with information around school improvements (work recently completed and “next steps” for future years), this document also provides statistical information for parents/carers about how pupil performance in key aspects of literacy and numeracy at Bramble Brae compares with other primary schools locally and nationally. The Standards and Quality Report also describes in some detail the recent wider achievements of Bramble Brae pupils.

A pupil and parent/carer friendly version of this document is also issued at the start of the school session. This provides more detail as to future improvements planned by the school, and who precisely within the staff team will drive forward each individual school development.

### **PRACTICAL INFORMATION**

#### **School Staff**

Head Teacher: Miss. A. Murray

Principal Teacher: Miss E. Mitchell

Teachers: Mrs. S. Allan, Miss J. Chalmers, Miss S. Dent, Miss E. Duffus, Mrs C. du Plessis, Mr R. Galbraith, Miss L. Gray, Mr L. Gray, Mrs. S. Jamieson, Miss N. Leckey, Mrs. E. MacDonald, Miss K. Mair, Miss R. Murray, Mrs. K. Napier, Miss F. Ritchie, Mrs. A. Russell, Mr B. Stewart

The school administrator is Mrs Julie Gray. She is always pleased to answer any queries that parents/carers may have. Mrs Coilia Virdee is our school support assistant. We share a janitor with other schools in the area therefore we do not always have the same person on a daily basis. Our janitor is Mr Jason McIntyre.

In addition, the school has a number of pupil support assistants (PSAs) who support individual pupils and groups of pupils in many ways, including over breaks and lunchtimes.

Pupil Support Assistants: Mrs. K. Davidson, Ms. K. Davidson (please note, this is not a typographic error, we **do** have two members of our staff with the exact same name), Mrs F. Gordon, Mrs. A. Grant, Mrs. D. Hall, Ms D. Howell, Mrs. V. Middleton, Mrs. L. Moir, Mrs. J. Park and Mrs J. Riddell

Other regular visitors to our school are Mr P. Coxall (Fernielea Gospel Hall), Mrs. R. Gibson (School Nurse), Mr. E. Lamont (Fountain Hall Church, Woodside), Ms. C. Mann (Woodwind Instructor) and Mr. G. Sutherland (Brass Instructor).

### School Hours

Primary 1 - 3	8.55 - 12.00 12.45 - 3.00	it is very important that pupils arrive promptly for the start of the school day. If children do not arrive promptly for school on a regular basis, it is almost certain that they will miss teacher explanation at the start of the day which cannot be made up completely at a later date. However, it is better to arrive late than not at all. In unkind weather, pupils and families should only arrive five minutes before the bell at the start of morning session (and for the afternoon session if pupils have returned home for lunch).
Primary 4 - 7	8.55 - 12.30 1.15 - 3.00	
Morning Break	10.30 - 10.50	

## **Holidays, Occasional Days and Staff In-Service**

You will be notified about holidays through our regular newsletters and an annual holiday sheet provided at the start of the school year to every family at Bramble Brae. These are also available on the website.

## **School Zone**

The school is designated by the authority as the one to serve children living within the following local streets:-

Bramble Brae	Hillcrest Place
Caperstown Crescent	Moir Avenue
Cummings Park Circle 1 - 143, 2 – 180	Moir Crescent
Cummings Park Drive & Crescent	Moir Drive 1 31 – 2 - 56
Cummings Park Terrace	Moir Green
Granitehill Place	North Anderson Drive 267 – 341
Granitehill Road	Provost Rust Drive 1 – 187

## **School Uniform**

Almost all of our families are agreed that children are at their smartest in uniform, and have committed to supporting the work of the school in this direction. Over the past few years we have introduced two additional items to our “uniform”; a very cost-effective fleecy jacket in black with a small school logo incorporated and a rainproof jacket in a choice of red or navy also bearing the school badge. Please note that “trackie bottoms” and hooded tops of any sort are not considered to be items of school uniform at Bramble Brae regardless of their colour. These items of clothing should be retained for leisure wear purposes out of school hours and only worn to school if there is a genuine “clothing emergency” at home. It is also particularly helpful if clothes purchased for our younger pupils can be “put on and taken off” by pupils themselves. We will, of course, be quick to assist if youngsters are having difficulty.

Our uniform is:

- dark coloured trousers, skirt or pinafore
- red school sweatshirt,
- white polo shirt
- black shoes

The items of uniform described above are available from all the major superstores at competitive prices. Our attractive school sweatshirt can be ordered from the school on an annual basis in June. We do try to keep a small supply of sweatshirts in all sizes over the course of the year but cannot guarantee that we will always have the size you need.

A clothing grant for school items may be available to families who meet certain qualifying criteria. Application forms and advice around qualification are available from our school office. Clothing Grant application forms are usually available from the office from the month of May onwards.

Please mark all items of clothing and footwear as clearly as you can with your child's name. Unmarked items can all too easily create big problems in a busy school situation. This is particularly the case where school uniform items such as sweatshirts, fleece jackets, grey trousers, popular designs of winter jackets, etc. can all appear identical if unnamed.

It is expected that all children will have a change of clothing for our very regular PE sessions. (For all children, around 2 hours each week is spent in the school gym or outside grassed areas in fine weather). The only kit required for regular PE sessions is shorts, change of T-shirt and gym shoes. It is really helpful if family members can check gym shoes regularly for "wear and tear;" it is amazing how quickly some youngsters can pick at new gym shoes until they are "away to nothing" if left unchecked. If pupils are consistently forgetting to bring their PE kit to school, the family will be contacted in order to discuss how this situation might be improved. It is important also that pupils can remove for themselves any items of personal jewellery which may present a risk to their personal safety or the safety of others during PE sessions.

Finally, "school uniform" at Bramble Brae should always include a change of footwear for all pupils' indoor use only. This is essential especially when the weather is poor and there is a danger of mud being dragged all through teaching and other carpeted areas.

### **School Lunches**

Nutritious meals are transported from nearby Heathryburn School each day and pupils are served by our kitchen team over three separate sittings between 12.00 and 12.45 p.m. Packed lunches brought in from home are also eaten in the school dining hall under supportive staff supervision. We now run a cashless system for the purchasing of school lunches. Money is loaded on to a card which is used to order lunch and is scanned in the lunch hall. The school is not usually in a position to provide lunches without payment unless your child qualifies for free meals, although we are always pleased to assist in any emergency situation. Schools meals are provided free for all pupils in Primary 1 – Primary 3.

Children whose parents receive Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, asylum seekers receiving support under Part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999, Child Tax Credit but **not** Working Tax Credit (if income shown on Tax Credits Award Notice is below £16105.00), both maximum Child Tax Credit and maximum Working Tax Credit with an income under £6420 are eligible for free meals, and application forms are available from the school office. Aberdeen City Council guidelines ask that parents provide proof of benefit entitlements before free school meals can begin.

### **Bramble Brae Breakfast Service**

Bramble Brae continues to offer its free breakfast service available to pupils from 7.55 a.m. daily, five days each week. Healthy breakfasts (cereals, toast, fruit, fruit juice and milk) are served through three staff, funded through Aberdeen City Council financial allocations made available to Bramble Brae and Manor Park Schools. Usually around 50 children daily (P1 – 7) are in attendance at Bramble Brae alone.

### **Healthy Snack Trolley**

In line with Bramble Brae's Health Promoting School status a variety of healthy snacks are available daily from the tuck shop over morning break. Pupil Council representatives have worked with NHS and school staff to introduce new foodstuffs to the tuck shop which will change on a regular basis. Items for sale include natural fruit juice, water, fresh fruit, vegetables, plain popcorn and rice cakes.

### **Supervision of Pupils Over Lunchtime and Morning Break**

Over morning break and lunchtime, pupils will be looked after in the playground by the pupil support assistant members of our staff team. Pupils are expected to follow closely the instructions of supervisory staff; our playground staff are acting on behalf of the school's head teacher whilst working in the playground and dining hall. Class teachers are not always available over the lunch period. If pupils do not follow the instructions of supervisory staff, families may be asked to make other arrangements for their son/daughter over lunchtime.

Children who go home over lunchtime or who have written permission to have their lunch elsewhere are the sole responsibility of parents/carers over this period and should return to school only five minutes before the beginning of afternoon school.

Parents are asked to co-operate with the school in stressing to pupils that they must stay within the school grounds unless they have written parental permission to go out at lunch time.

Some shelter is provided around the building, but it is not over-generous. In unkind weather pupils should be suitably and appropriately clad. If indoor lunch-time has to be organised due to inclement weather, pupils who go home over lunchtime should only return to school immediately before the resumption of the afternoon session (1.00 p.m. for P1 - 3 or 1.30 p.m. for P4 - 7).

## **Pupils Safety in and Around The School Car Park**

Due to the way our school campus is laid out, it is absolutely essential that families assist us in separating vehicles and children in the school car park at all times. Since the main gate to the school car park is used by all cars and delivery vehicles visiting the school, it is important that pupils are not walked through the school car park when accompanied by parents/carers. If this happens, pupils are then much more inclined to cross the school car park when unaccompanied. Children arriving at school at any point in the day should always use one of the three pedestrian/child footpaths leading to the appropriate pupil entry point for their age and stage. (Two of these footpaths are off Cummings Park Drive itself; the third footpath enters via Bramble Brae). If your child is arriving at school during the school day for any reason (lateness, medical appointment, etc.), then they should not use the main entrance unaccompanied due to its proximity to the car park. In such circumstances, pupils should always be accompanied to school by an adult.

Parents calling at the school by car to “drop off” or collect children at either end of the school day should never use the school car park. The extremely compact nature of our car park plus the extensive pupil movement around our main gate area at busy times means that it is simply not safe to do so. Instead, on clear police advice parents/carers must park safely in the surrounding streets or, even better still, endeavour to collect pupils on foot. When parking near the school it is also absolutely essential that parents/carers and other family members or friends avoid stopping on the yellow “zig-zag” markings nearby. The Highway Code (Rule 238, Road Traffic Regulation Act, 1984) makes it very clear that to stop on these markings at any time between 8.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. for even a moment or two is a road traffic offence which can lead to prosecution.

## **Newsletters and Other Everyday Communications**

A Bramble Brae newsletter containing information regarding the school is produced regularly. It is a good idea to check your child's schoolbag on a regular basis in order to ensure that the newsletter and other items of correspondence are not still to be found there! Please remember that teachers and pupils also provide updates on the school website and blog. In an ever evolving world of technology, the Groupcall text service is also used to communicate updates and information to parents.

## **Medical and Dental Support for Children In School**

The school doctor visits throughout the year and carries out programmed health checks including vision and hearing. She also progresses the standard medical examinations of P1 children following entry to school and parents are invited to be present during this examination. If staff are concerned about any aspect of pupil health, then these concerns will be brought to the attention of parents/carers and the school doctor may be asked to see the child and meet with the family.

The school nurse also pays regular visits to Bramble Brae, and she is able to help families directly with routine health issues such as headlice. If any parent does find evidence of lice, you are asked to let the school know so that the school nurse can be kept informed. A child found to have headlice should not return to school until any infestation has been treated. If any child is found to have headlice, parents will be contacted immediately so that treatment can be carried out at home. The excellent local facility "The Healthy Hoose" is also available to offer help and support to families in respect of headlice treatment, childhood ailments and any other matters of health concern.

Each year, our school also has visits from the NHS Grampian "Childsmile" team. Routine dental screening checks are progressed, fluoride treatments provided and additional advice made available to families.

### **Child Protection**

Given the ongoing priority of ensuring that all children are safe at all times, schools are required to raise a concern if they feel that any child or young person may have come to harm as a consequence of possible abuse. Each school has a named senior member of staff appointed to be responsible for Child Protection matters. In our school that person is the head teacher. Should you wish to talk further about child protection and the safety of children please feel free to contact the school. As a school, we have good contacts with medical officers, social workers and the police - any or all of whom may become involved if child protection concerns are raised. We will always ensure that you are kept informed and advised as soon as possible of any action which may be initiated regarding your child.

### **Illness, Accidents and Other Emergency Situations In School**

Minor injuries will be treated in school. If, however, it is necessary to take/send a child to the Accident and Emergency Department every effort will be made to contact you first. Please ensure therefore that you notify the school of your address and phone number at work or your new address and number if you change jobs or mobile telephone. Our school has had fairly significant problems in recent years with family members changing their mobile telephone number and it just inadvertently "slipping their mind" to let the school office know about any such changes.

If your child does suffer an accident at school it may be necessary to arrange that you or the emergency contact person comes to accompany the child to receive the required medical attention. Similarly, a child who has taken ill at school may require to go home to recuperate and to rest or to seek further medical advice from the family doctor. (Please note that in the event of the school being unable to contact family members, pupil health and wellbeing will not be compromised – the head teacher or delegate will take any steps necessary in order to ensure that prompt medical attention is obtained).

All Aberdeen City Schools are now expected to make emergency evacuation arrangements in respect of nominating another building in their immediate

area which can be used on a short term basis if they are required to clear their own buildings for any urgent reason. Such emergency accommodation will only be used until parents and families can be contacted through school-held contacts. It has now been arranged that Cummings Park Community Centre will be our emergency location in such circumstances. Since the Community Centre is most usually closed in the afternoons, it has been necessary to make special arrangements for school access throughout the entire pupil day. In the event of our being unable to use Cummings Park Community Centre for any reason associated with its very close proximity to our school, Northfield Academy has agreed to provide standby accommodation.

Head teachers have total discretion as to the closure of the school when they anticipate storm conditions which would put children at risk. It is therefore essential that you frequently remind your child of the name and address of their emergency contact person so that he/she knows exactly where to go if you are not at home and an emergency closure has to take place. Bramble Brae school participates within Aberdeen City Council's "Information Line" arrangements. We will use this to tell you about winter/emergency situations, and we will send out an annual reminder of how to use the service. Meanwhile, the school P.I.N. number is 011190, and the phone number you use to begin with is 0870 054 1999. Calls cost around 10p from a landline, they may cost a little more using a mobile network.

### **Insurance**

No insurance cover is held by Aberdeen City Council to provide automatic compensation in the event of personal accident or death. It is your responsibility as a parent to insure your child for personal accident or death if you feel this to be appropriate. Aberdeen City Council does hold third party liability insurance which indemnifies the Council for claims from third parties eg. parents of pupils who have suffered injury, illness, loss or damage arising from the negligence of the Council or its employees. However, if there was no negligence established, no claim would be accepted by the Council.

### **Charities**

Bramble Brae has always given generously to charities identified through consultation with pupils and staff and you may be asked occasionally if you would like to support a worthy cause.

### **Helping/Volunteering In School**

The school welcomes offers of help from parents for tasks such as helping in school, helping on outings etc. However, most helpers in school now need to be "PVG" checked. This can take a little time. We also ask that parents who volunteer to help understand that toddlers cannot accompany them. Parents who would like to help in school are asked to notify any member of school staff at any time.