



CO-EDUCATIONAL
DAY SCHOOL

FOR 2-11 YEAR OLDS

A Warm Welcome

We are delighted you have picked up our prospectus and we are excited for you to learn about Brackenfield School. Founded in 1977, we have been Harrogate's Prep school of choice for over 45 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.

Rated 'Excellent' by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) in June 2023 our school's family ethos and strong core values are bringing more families than ever to our door, keen for their children to experience the best possible start to their education, in a nurturing atmosphere that enables every child to achieve.

In this publication, we are thrilled to explain a little more about the opportunities given to our pupils and how the community and environment at our wonderful school support their development, attainment and confidence.

We look forward to welcoming your family to Brackenfield School.

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The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

ISI inspection, June 2023

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Our Headmaster

Mr. Masterson is an experienced educator with a very international outlook. He has taught and led schools in Ireland, Qatar, The Netherlands, Italy and Oman. A Lead Improvement Partner for the Council of British International Schools, Mr Masterson also holds a National Professional Qualification in Executive Leadership and specialises in assessment and maths.

"I joined Brackenfield as Headmaster in 2020, and since then have helped the Brackenfield community to establish our well-renowned mission areas and core school values. This has enabled us to blend our strong family ethos and tradition with best-in-class education, as highlighted by Brackenfield's glowing Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) report in 2023, which praised our school for excellence on 28 occasions!

I believe that while pupils are the most important individuals in any school, the staff at Brackenfield represent our greatest strength. With the highest levels of care and nurture, our pupils feel comfortable, challenged, and confident. With a broad curriculum that encompasses the Brackenfield Mission and Values, all pupils are guided and encouraged to reach their full potential. Brackenfield is as much a community as it is a school. Our Friends of Brackenfield School (FOBS), comprised of parents who provide exceptional support, create an atmosphere where everyone feels welcome. I strive to support all families in enjoying life at Brackenfield while ensuring that all pupils become the best version of themselves, ready to connect with one another and the world they will grow into."

Our Missions & Values

Curriculum and 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, our pupils not only excel academically, but they also emerge as confident and empathetic individuals who take pride in representing their school and making meaningful contributions to their community.

Our newly introduced Ultimate Bracken Award has been created to run alongside our broad curriculum. This comprises a multitude of activities for pupils to participate and engage in. Almost all the activities and tasks are underpinned by the school's four core mission areas. These activities are to be independently considered and completed.

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Pupils have an excellent moral awareness, rooted firmly in their adherence to the school values of kindness and respect.

ISI inspection, June 2023

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Our Nursery

At Brackenfield's nursery, we aim to give our children the best possible start, so they are happy, confident, active, sociable, and ready for school. Whether in the Wrens Class (2–3-year-olds) or the Robins Class (3–4-year-olds), children enjoy age-appropriate activities that allow each one to extend their social, communication, and thinking skills alongside their problem-solving capabilities. We aim to identify each child's unique interests and abilities, planning activities that will engage and inspire them to discover more about the world around them.

Led by our experienced Nursery Manager, our qualified team delivers a comprehensive curriculum following the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidelines, incorporating a mix of structured and informal activities that foster inspiring learning through play.

- Open year-round
- Perfect for busy, working families
- Qualified and experienced Early Years staff
- Daily specialist teaching including French, Music, and Forest School

Brackenfield Nursery offers a stimulating environment for young children, featuring well-equipped classrooms, space for music and indoor play, and an expansive playground with engaging resources. As part of the main school, we benefit from exceptional facilities and expert teachers. Children have weekly French and Music lessons with specialist staff, and they look forward to their twice-weekly sessions of sports in the main hall. With a strong focus on family, we celebrate special occasions like Mother's Day and Father's Day, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

Our Nursery is a thriving component of our school community. The participation in school life by our youngest pupils means that once they are ready for the move up to Reception, the transition is seamless. Their familiarity with the school environment and surroundings contributes to a smooth and comfortable transition process. During the summer term of every year, the children take part in a 'moving up morning' which gives them another opportunity to meet their new class teacher and take part in taster activities. These visits excite and familiarise the children before they move up a year group in September.

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Children in the EYFS make rapid progress.

ISI inspection, June 2023

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Reception to Year 6

At Brackenfield School the academic curriculum is divided into three main stages: Early Years (Age 2-5) Infants (Age 5-7) and Juniors (Age 7-11). Each child enjoys lessons in maths, English, science and the humanities as well as opportunities for French, music, drama, ICT, PSHCE, art, design technology and sport within the normal teaching timetable.

We operate a varied curriculum which ties together elements of many different subjects under a theme, encouraging children to develop a love of learning and a thirst for knowledge. This integrated approach across subjects, with teaching input from music, language and sports specialists, allows all the children the opportunity to demonstrate their strengths. Positive experiences in the classroom deepen children's understanding and support

progression across the rest of the curriculum. 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.

We have high expectations for our pupils and prepare them for their next schools through stimulating classwork, independent study, practice exam papers and a range of activities that increase resilience, determination, independence and leadership.

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 their first-choice senior schools and why so many of our children are awarded scholarships to local independent senior schools.

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Pupils' attitudes to their work are excellent. From the earliest age, they invariably engage with commitment and enthusiasm with their learning.

ISI inspection, June 2023

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Creativity and Expression

Music, Drama and Art are important elements of the curriculum for all pupils at Brackenfield School. Not only do they develop areas of talent they also support children's confidence and communication skills. 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 participate in our school orchestra, junior choir, or percussion ensembles. Formal and informal concerts are organised throughout the year, and our students are encouraged to perform at our weekly assemblies. Junior choir is available each week for those children who would like to participate. These activities help to give children the confidence they require to perform in public, which will be an invaluable asset during both their school and working life.

Our dedicated team of peripatetic teachers offer a large range of instruments for one-to-one teaching, including piano, guitar, drums and violin. Additionally, we offer singing lessons, speech and drama coaching and art classes. If pupils are looking for a talent, we can help them find it. If they already have a talent, we can help them excel!

Enrichment

In addition to our curriculum and strong focus on learning, pupils are actively involved in various activities during the school week. We are committed to providing pupils with opportunities to explore new interests, develop their strengths and pursue their passions. A vital part of the Brackenfield pupil experience is to become immersed in the performing arts, sports or various other enriching activities. It is also a wonderful way for children to get to know those from other year groups, and further instils our family ethos.

We understand that children can greatly benefit from learning experiences in and out of the classroom. Trips and excursions provide valuable opportunities for children to broaden their horizons and deepen their knowledge of the world. Each year group has the chance to go on different trips, including visits to zoos, farm parks, museums, and more.

Our older children also benefit from residential trips such as PGL, as well as an overseas trip to Paris once they reach Year 5 and 6.

After school, we have an extensive extra-curricular programme that includes support with homework, to other clubs such as games, coding, wildlife as well as other sporting activities. We understand that parents often have busy lives, and working between school hours can be a struggle. Here at Brackenfield, we offer wraparound care to help support where we can before and after school. Parents can drop their children off at 7:30 am for our breakfast club. After school, we offer a wide choice of extra-curricular activities from 3:30 pm until 4:30 pm. We also provide extended after-school care until 5:55 pm. This provides the peace of mind that comes from knowing your children are happy and busy too.

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...inspectors found the extra-curricular programme to be carefully nuanced so as to provide pupils with new experiences and foster their individual talents.

ISI inspection, June 2023

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Learning Outdoors

While we embrace technology to inspire, energise, and transform learning, we also make sure that our children maintain a strong sense of balance in their appreciation of human connections, nature, and the outdoors. By understanding and engaging with the outdoors, our pupils are encouraged to become better stewards of the world. They develop respect, empathy, and ideas for sustainability. Forest School 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.

Our Forest School sessions are enjoyed by children from every year group. From Nursery to Year 6, our pupils can spend time outdoors where they can learn new skills. They learn how to build dens, make woodland art and often use the campfire for outdoor cooking. The benefits of learning outdoors are in abundance as children develop their teamwork and collaboration skills, their imagination and curiosity, but above all, being outdoors is beneficial to wellbeing.

Competition and Cooperation

Sport plays a very important role in the curriculum for all age groups at Brackenfield. We are very fortunate to have our own playing fields across the road and use of the best swimming facilities in Harrogate, with three pools and highly qualified instructors. 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. Although we are a small school, we are very proud to boast current and past Olympians as well as professional footballers and golfers.

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Pupils throughout the school are successful in music and drama examinations, sport and art.

ISI inspection, June 2023

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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.

We recognise our potential to make a positive impact through acts of service and charity. This commitment drives us to explore and support community projects both individually and as a school, while also emphasising the importance of kindness and determination in advocating for charitable causes. As part of our community involvement, our school regularly participates in organized litter picks in the Harrogate area. We have also fostered a meaningful connection with two local care homes, where the pupils visit every month, bringing joy and companionship to the elderly residents. Additionally, our school council is proactive in organising various events throughout the year to raise funds for our three chosen school charities.

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

Pastoral and Emotional Well-being

The personal health and well-being of all our pupils is very important to everyone at Brackenfield. Pupils are all part of a form, where they share important social and circle time with their peers and their form teacher, as well as teaching time. All staff are available to pupils to deal with any concerns they may have. Pupils are encouraged to share their concerns and ask for help if they need it. On arrival, each pupil is allocated one of our four houses. House activities play a key part in the whole-school events throughout the year, including inter-house competitions. We are one of the very few small schools nationally to have a dedicated Director of Welfare as well as trained Mental Health first aid members of staff.





Beyond Brackenfield

We are passionate about ensuring that our Year 6 pupils are given responsibilities to help them prepare for the real world, so fostering leadership skills is a top priority for teaching staff. We offer a broad range of leadership opportunities throughout the school, these include, House captains, school council roles, classroom monitors and many more. The pupils also enjoy accompanying parents around their school during open events where they proudly showcase Brackenfield to new audiences.

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

Our small size and strong connections with families enable us to effectively prepare students for their chosen path. We provide individualised support to prepare pupils for any entrance exams or interviews. Brackenfield pupils are well-prepared and confident, which has led to a positive reputation in senior schools. Last year, our destination schools for Year 6 leavers included Harrogate Ladies College, The Grammar School at Leeds and Harrogate Grammar School.

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Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of the importance of wise decision-making and its role in determining their future successes.

ISI inspection, June 2023

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In partnership with parents

Life at Brackenfield is focused on happy children and an excellent well-resourced education. We strive to make school a place where children eagerly anticipate each morning and are brimming with stories to share with their families at the end of the day. We believe that children learn best when there is a clear and effective partnership among 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. We take pride in the positive and supportive relationship between children, teachers, and support staff, and we actively encourage close contact with class teachers to ensure the best possible support for each child.

Forfar

EDUCATION

Brackenfield School is owned and governed by Forfar Education. Founded in 2019 by CEO John Forsyth, it specialises in the education of children. Named after the area in Scotland where John's family comes from, Forfar has a strong family ethos; honest, transparent, hardworking, and always putting the needs of the children first. As a group, Forfar owns and manages schools in the UK and across Europe, firmly believing that competition is a good thing; resilience, kindness, and leadership are key life skills for all today's young.

Brackenfield, alongside other Forfar schools, benefits from guidance, governance and support from the Forfar team and advisory board in its pursuit of academic excellence. With access to a broad range of resources, skills and expertise across all schools, we collaborate and share best practice. Not only is this a brilliant opportunity for staff development and training but it also provides excellent inter-school activities,

from debating competitions, music, sport and access to outdoor learning.

Forfar's schools equip children with the confidence and resourcefulness that prepares them to grow, thrive and find success in an ever-changing world. This approach ensures that the needs of each child are at the heart of our schools to create friendly, welcoming communities that empower children with the tools to be successful.

- We create environments where staff, parents and the wider community are proud of their school and feel part of it
- We provide solutions for busy parents, and we expect them to abide by the same values that we teach their children
- We believe in recruiting inspiring, well-trained teachers every step of the way, critical for unlocking the potential in every child
- We are a 'down to earth' transparent organisation that treats everyone the same

- We will not compromise on keeping your child safe or on our teaching quality
- Through our focus on providing an outstanding education tailored to each child, we support every child to achieve more than they may have thought possible
- We are generous and patient with families and staff that face unforeseen difficulties
- We encourage independent learning, a community spirit, and we empower pupils to embrace responsibility and learn to celebrate diversity in a spirit of understanding and tolerance that helps them become better global citizens

If you would like further information about Forfar Education please contact the Chairman, John Forsyth, directly:

jf@forfareducation.co.uk

07443 103805



Admissions

We know that selecting the right school for your child is a big decision, therefore we have made the process as simple as possible for you. We encourage prospective families to visit us as many times as they wish, through personal tours with Mr Masterson or on one of our scheduled open days. To visit our school is to truly feel our school, its warmth, vibrancy, and friendliness. Children are also invited to experience a typical day with their prospective class on a taster day.

Get in Touch

We would love to hear from you, so please get in touch today to arrange a personal tour of Brackenfield with Our Headmaster, Mr Masterson.

Please call **01423 508558** or email:

admissions@brackenfieldschool.co.uk and our friendly admissions team will be available to help.

Register

Following your visit, we will send you a registration form to enable you to register your child. The registration process for both nursery and main school places requires a form to be completed and a non-refundable fee is payable. After this step is completed, children are invited to experience a typical day with their intended year group.



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Forfar

Part of the Forfar
Education Group