



# Notting Hill & Ealing High School

## World Languages Pathway

Capitalising on the strengths and opportunities of being an all-through school, our vision is to give our pupils the chance to develop a high level of fluency in at least one foreign language through the creation of clear languages pathways which girls can follow throughout their time at NHEHS.

From September 2017, the NHEHS World Languages Pathway will enable us to offer one language from Year 1 right the way through to leaving school. All pupils will learn Mandarin in the Junior School from Year 1. We firmly believe that if a child's talent and natural interest in languages is to flourish, early language learning is key. The skills and confidence pupils develop through learning Mandarin will also give them a flying start in their choice of French, German or Spanish at the start of Year 7.

The introduction of this pathway will be gradual: for instance, since September 2014 Year 5 have been enjoying introductory lessons in Mandarin and they will continue these into Year 6, giving them a strong foundation for our Year 7 Mandarin course.

We will also continue to offer a variety of language clubs in the Junior School, giving girls a chance to explore a European language alongside Chinese if they wish.

Our 'World Languages Pathway' continues until the end of Year 8. This will allow all of our pupils a sustained opportunity to explore Mandarin, plus one European language, before deciding where their talents and interests lie. At that point, girls can choose to carry on with the 'World Languages Pathway' or switch to a purely 'European Pathway' by choosing not to continue with Mandarin and taking up a second European



language. The majority of girls will study two languages to GCSE level.

Our new languages strategy is one of continuous language learning and improvement which will allow achievement to be recognised and learning and enthusiasm sustained. An ab initio stream will be provided for girls with no experience of learning Mandarin who join us in Year 7, while girls transferring from our Junior School will move into the improvers Mandarin set. Arrangements will be made to test any girl who has learnt Mandarin in her primary school and she will be placed in the appropriate set. Progress and achievement will be regularly reviewed to ensure that all girls are able to fulfill their potential and movement between these groups during the school year is envisaged.

We already have a very large number of girls taking at least one European language to A level, and many go on to study languages at university. Our hope is that many of our pupils will want to continue learning Mandarin right through to A level too.

In addition advanced Mandarin and European language courses will become available to girls who are not taking AS or A2 level courses, for example as part of the Sixth Form General Studies/Enrichment programme.

For our pupils, global communication is a normal part of modern life. Being able to speak another language is important for commercial and social reasons, but true communication comes from an understanding of the culture, history and context

that inform a language. Language learning provides such knowledge and also develops life-long skills; ones that we aim to promote through excellence in language teaching and learning.

Since the introduction of Mandarin at NHEHS in 2007, its popularity has grown hugely and the department achieves exceptional results (e.g. 100%A\* at GCSE in 2014 and 2015). Girls and their parents recognise the importance of this language in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy but, perhaps more importantly, learners find it a fascinating and engaging intellectual challenge as well as a doorway to this ancient yet vibrant culture. Though a growing number of schools teach Mandarin, it is rare for pupils to achieve any real degree of fluency. The NHEHS World Languages Pathway will therefore provide a distinctive advantage.

Our European languages remain very important to us and are extremely popular. We are very proud of the fact we are still able to offer German to GCSE and A level as well as, of course, Spanish and French. As part of our new “Languages Pathways” we are also planning to increase the time allocation for the teaching of European languages in the Senior School.

All foreign languages at NHEHS are taught by graduate language specialists supported by a team of dedicated mother-tongue languages assistants.

*Lucinda Hunt  
December 2014*

