



Curriculum Policy

Including Extra-Curricular Policy

(Senior School)

Aims

The aims of our school curriculum are:

- To educate each pupil in a breadth of fields, in such a way that she is able to develop intellectually, creatively, socially, emotionally, spiritually, aesthetically and physically; to stimulate her enjoyment of learning so that she is able to gain pleasure from the variety of curriculum opportunities on offer; to identify her strengths and interests, and to keep her future options open for as long as possible
- To enable each pupil to acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy, as well as in linguistic, scientific and technological fields, so that she can be as successful as possible, confident in her abilities and equipped for the challenges that lie ahead, whether they are at the next stage of her school career or beyond, in Higher Education and the future world of work
- To give the opportunity for each pupil to develop the desire to study subjects further, when it comes to choice over the continuing curriculum at GCSE, A Level, university or beyond, and to foster a life-long passion for learning
- To help each pupil to take responsibility for her own learning, punctuality, behaviour and attendance, and to understand that education is a life-long opportunity, and that it does not all happen at school, but that strong foundations, good habits and study skills can be laid down at school
- To give each pupil the opportunity to gain the best qualifications she can, at each level, in order to give her wider choices in the future, where she will find herself in competitive situations where such things may be decisive
- To enable each pupil to develop the skills and knowledge to make informed choices about possible future Higher Education courses, careers and to gain some experience of the world of work
- To enable pupils with Specific Educational Needs including those with either Physical or Learning Difficulties and Disabilities to access all the learning opportunities available at the school, and to identify those who may be in need of additional learning support
- To offer equal opportunities in all aspects of school life, recognising the importance of different cultures
- To enable each pupil to learn about and understand different cultures and moral perspectives, to grow spiritually and gain understanding of different religions, and to grow socially, developing self-confidence and good self-esteem so that she can form friendships and relationships, and play a full part in her community and society as a whole, including having due regard to preventing radicalisation
- To consider and develop her own sense of values, including Fundamental British Values (FBV), and their application in the choices she makes in her life. This will also



include choices over her health, and her participation in the communities of which she is a part

- In general terms, to develop each pupil's ability to consider issues critically, to learn independently, to develop her own ideas creatively, and to see how she may apply her intellectual, social and physical abilities, and bring her personal values to bear in her adult life and the chosen fields of her career

Actions

The curriculum is developed and delivered by teachers through departmental schemes of work, which are the responsibility of Heads of Department, taking into account the national curriculum where relevant, any required syllabus for the subject at that stage for national examinations, and the ideas of the relevant staff relating to other material which is thought to be of interest or relevance or importance at that stage.

School Teaching aims:

- For all teachers to teach their subject in an interesting and challenging manner, taking account of recent developments in their subject, bringing breadth, depth, pace and challenge to the classroom so as to stimulate and foster enthusiasm for the subject and to enable each pupil to realise her potential.
- For all teaching to take account of the broad range of pupils' preferred learning styles, any special educational needs, and the academic ability of each individual in a teaching group.
- Intrinsic to teaching should be Assessment for Learning, whereby teachers' lessons are informed by pupil performance in previous assessments, and whereby teachers encourage pupils to take responsibility for their learning by providing constructive comments in their marking and by offering individual targets to guide pupil learning.

Senior School Curriculum Content

Key Stage 3

In Key Stage 3, pupils have a broad curriculum which aims to build on learning at KS2. Pupils are taught by subject specialists in English, Mathematics, the separate Sciences, History, Geography, Philosophy, Religion & Ethics (PRE), Design and Technology, Computer Science, Music, Art, Drama, and PE. In Year 9, girls study in greater depth 3 creative and/or technology subjects chosen from Computer Science, Design and Technology, Music, Art or Drama.

The school offers a broad language curriculum. All girls study Mandarin in Year 7, and complete a carousel of 3 modern European languages (German, French and Spanish). In Year 8, girls choose any 2 of these 4 modern languages to continue studying. Latin is studied by all students in Years 8 and 9.

In Year 9, some preparation for the GCSE/IGCSE courses is begun in subjects where this is felt to be relevant.



Key Stage 4

Girls in Key Stage 4 typically study 9 or 10 subjects at GCSE. All study the core subjects: English Literature, English Language, Mathematics, and the separate Sciences leading to either a Double or Triple science award. Girls are prepared for the IGCSE award in English and English Literature, Mathematics, the Sciences, History, Geography and in French, Spanish and German as this provides rigorous preparation for A Level. The school does not take a view on requiring a particular type of GCSE to be taught (IGCSE or otherwise) but instead focusses on ensuring that each course is appropriate for developing subject understanding and passion.

Girls take at least one modern foreign language (many take two) and at least one humanity subject (History, Geography or PRE) and two others from either languages, humanities or other GCSE options including Computer Science, Art, Drama, Music, DT and Latin. Students who either opt for Latin GCSE, or are able linguists, can also opt to study Classical Greek GCSE as an extra which is studied outside the normal timetable.

All girls in Year 10 have a 'Wellbeing' lesson which looks at issues relating to Health Education and Personal Development. This is overseen by the Year 10 Wellbeing Co-ordinator. In Year 11, girls have a regular lecture slot with Years 12 and 13, and the opportunity to present their own findings from lectures they have seen the following week. They also have single lesson of Ethics per half term (as part of a carousel with PE) allowing them to explore many contemporary areas of public debate, overseen by the Head of PRE. Girls have a programme of classroom visits by the Head of Careers to advise about future careers and A-Level choices. Students also have the opportunity to talk about future careers with a specialist at the start of Year 11, and a Work Experience week at the end of Year 11 provides students will valuable insight into various careers.

Key Stage 5

In the Sixth Form, girls choose to study 3 or 4 subjects in Year 12 leading to either three or four A levels in Year 13 with an option for those studying three subjects to study Sports Science as a 2-year AS Course. They have a very wide choice and we block the timetable to allow as many girls to follow their own interests as possible. A number of girls choose a mix of arts, science and maths A Levels. They also can choose to take up to two new subjects available only at A Level (such as History of Art, Economics, Politics and Psychology). We have opted for a linear approach to A Level study. Therefore, A-Level examinations are taken at the end of the two year course in the Summer Term of Year 13. There are no AS examinations in Year 12 but girls have internal examinations after the Easter break instead.

Girls can choose to study A Levels from the following 25 subjects: English Literature, English Language, Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Spanish, French, German, Chinese, History, Geography, Philosophy and Ethics, Art, Drama, Music, DT, Latin, Classical Greek, Computer Science, Economics, History of Art, Politics and Psychology.

In addition, girls follow an 'Electives' programme which contains short (six week) non-examined courses, with topics ranging from the Science of Cooking to Surrealism to the Psychology of Happiness. Girls take six of these across the year, and also take a Research Skills



short course, to support their completion of the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) and transition into university-style learning. The EPQ programme is overseen by the EPQ Co-ordinator. Girls start on an EPQ early in Year 12 and the course is designed to be completed at the end of Year 12. It is highly regarded by universities and considered excellent preparation for university entry.

Work experience and community service opportunities are facilitated. Higher Education and Careers guidance is provided. There also is a programme of Sports Leadership opportunities and the Young Enterprise scheme.

Personal Social Health Citizenship and Economic Education

Personal Social Health Citizenship and Economic Education (PSHCEE) is an integral part of the school curriculum and special timetabled provision is made, so that the whole school has a lesson on Friday morning Period 1. Careers guidance is given and study skills are also taught in this session. This is taken by the Form Tutor or by specialist staff or visiting speakers and is directed by the Head of Year and Deputy Head Pastoral. The Sixth Form has a lecture programme which covers a range of related topics relevant to girls at this stage and is directed by the Head of Sixth. Girls invite speakers to address Y11-13 as part of our lecture programme. On these alternate weeks, girls are able to choose between two invited lecturers. Girls lead on all aspects of inviting and hosting their guest, gaining valuable skills and independence.

Physical Education

A full programme of physical education is offered at every stage of a pupil's career and the school offers many opportunities for pupils to take part in sport and to gain pleasure and satisfaction from their achievements in this field, both in the mainstream curriculum and through a range of extra-curricular activities.

SEND and EAL provision

All SEND and EAL provision is co-ordinated by the SENCO who works with Heads of Year, Heads of Department, the Learning Support Teacher and Deputy Heads to meet the individual needs of pupils on the SEND and EAL register and to identify those girls who may have specific difficulties or disabilities which require additional help. Very able students are catered for in the regular curriculum and through the many extra-curricular opportunities on offer at the school.

Organisation of teaching groups

Girls in the lower, middle and senior years of the Senior School are taught in groups considered best suited to enable the most effective delivery of the curriculum.

In the Senior school, girls have already passed an entry test to come to the school, and so are not banded for English, the humanities or performing arts subjects. However, setting does take place in subjects where it is considered more appropriate:

At Key Stage 3, girls in Year 7 are placed in divisions for **Mandarin** based on any prior learning or whether they are starting the language *ab initio*. There is regular review of girls' progress in Mandarin and divisions in Mandarin continue into Year 8.



Girls are also placed in divisions for **Mathematics** at the start of Year 8, which is based on internal tests and the end of Year 7 exam.

At Key Stage 4, girls are only setted or banded according to ability in **Mathematics**. All girls in the Mathematics divisions are prepared for the IGCSE award which they take at the end of Year 11. There is regular review of each girl's progress in mathematics, and there is the opportunity for movement between divisions if it is felt that a girl may be better suited to another group. Girls in the top set are also prepared for the 'Additional Maths' qualification.

English, Science, European Languages, and all other subjects are taught in mixed ability groups determined by the option blocks.

In the Sixth Form, girls are taught in groups according to their subject choices.

PE/SPORT: PE in the Senior school is generally taught in whole year blocks for at least one double lesson to allow for inter-house competitions, more opportunity for team practice and option choice. In Years 12-13, PE is timetabled and remains a compulsory element of the timetable.

Homework

Students should be set homework on a regular basis to enable them to prepare for the lesson ahead, to consolidate and further their subject knowledge and understanding and to encourage independent learning and pupil personal responsibility for her work and progress. Homework set should be appropriate to the attainment, knowledge, and ability of the pupils; it should be manageable in the time and should help to increase the pleasure of studying for each pupil.

Homework should be regularly marked by the teacher in accordance with the School Marking, Assessment and Homework policy, to encourage the pupil to take personal responsibility for her own learning by providing constructive comments in their marking and by offering individual targets to guide pupil learning.



Extra-curricular Policy

Aims:

- To pursue areas of interest that may enrich or enliven subjects taught on the curriculum
- To give opportunities or further opportunities which are not easily made available on the curriculum (this may include the learning of a musical instrument)
- To continue with interests which might not be possible on the curriculum at this stage, in order that they are not lost, and can be developed further in the future
- To enjoy taking part in activities with others
- To provide a wide variety of provision so each student is able to thrive in their own personal area of interest.

Activities:

Senior School

Extra-curricular activities are mainly organised through after-school or lunchtime clubs of one sort or another. These activities can be run by staff but the sixth form are encouraged to lead their own clubs with a member of staff as a 'link teacher'. Some student run clubs have included Dissection Club, Chess Club and Gardening Club. The school encourages initiatives from the girls through the Assistant Head (Co-Curricular) and the Head of Sixth. Some activities, such as fencing and dance are paid extras, but most clubs are provided by departments and the aim is to be as inclusive as possible. Where an activity is over-subscribed, the activity is organised on a rota basis so that all girls can have a turn or there are clear and fair means of selection. Although a small number of PE and music activities are organised on a competitive or aptitude basis, such as the Netball and Hockey clubs after school, and Senior School Chamber Orchestra and Chamber Choir, there is a large range of other sporting, music, and subject related clubs which are open to girls of all abilities and aptitudes if the interest and enthusiasm is there. A timetable is drawn up every term by the Assistant Head (Co-curricular), working with the Deputy Heads to help minimise as far as possible clashes which may affect a number of pupils. This timetable is given to the girls at the beginning of each term and is published on the school website. There is an extra-curricular fair in September to raise awareness of clubs and societies to all girls.

A number of educational visits or school workshops are organised at each of the key stages by departments to further the aims of the curriculum. Some may involve older students attending lectures, galleries etc. off-site, accompanied or unaccompanied by staff. Workshops are increasingly organised for pupils within school, such as the Poetry workshop, when pupils may experience an activity off timetable or be withdrawn from lessons to take part. In addition, a variety of workshops/clubs exist at each key stage to stimulate critical, independent and creative thinking and wider interest in scholarship at a higher level, including the 'Da Vinci' Club which organises subject specialist master classes for pupils in Years 10, as well as the Debating, Model United Nations and Public Speaking clubs for girls in the Lower and Middle / Senior schools. There is flourishing interest and participation in the Duke of Edinburgh Award available from Year 10 upwards and regular expeditions are organised by the DoE Co-ordinator.



A range of visiting speakers come to the school to enrich the curriculum at all key stages. Some lectures by visiting speakers are organised by Heads of Year to support the PSHCEE curriculum and take place in the Senior school within the PSHCEE Friday slot, or instead of assembly on occasion. Other lectures are organised by Heads of Department and usually occur after school. There is a separate lecture programme organised by the Year 12s for Years 11, 12 and 13 on alternate weeks.

Assemblies often provide a degree of extra-curricular or PSHCEE education, whether conducted by staff or pupils.

Competitive events with other schools are usually held after school, but may occur in the school day e.g. Trust Sport rallies, or require a team to leave before the end of the day, e.g. Hans Woyda Mathematics competitions.

Private group LAMDA drama lessons are held outside the normal curriculum. Private individual music lessons are held on a rotating basis through a particular day, so different lessons are missed each week for the instrumental lesson.

Many students pursue interests outside school. As much as possible, providing they do not jeopardise attendance at school for curricular studies and other commitments, we encourage this, and help pupils see their lives in a holistic manner as much as they can.

The extra-curricular clubs do change from time-to-time and an up-to-date rota can be found on the School website and Firefly.

Parent and School partnership

We recognise that the successful education of all girls is dependent on a partnership between the school, the pupil and her parents where there is mutual support, commitment and good communication on a pupil's achievements, progress and enjoyment. Where there are concerns, we welcome hearing about them early from pupils and parents so that effective measures can be put in place to support a pupil's progress and development.

The pupil diary is an important means of communication between staff and parents and should be checked regularly in the Years 7-9 by both parents and Form Tutors. Parents are encouraged to read with their daughter her progress reports sent by the school relating to her academic achievements and progress, and to comment on the parent reply slip. Parents are invited to meet their daughter's teachers to hear about their daughter's progress in parent / teacher meetings. Additional meetings can also be organised between parents and their daughter's Head of Year and other relevant staff as necessary.

We hope that parents will support the school by:

- participating in discussions concerning their daughter's progress and attainments
- being positive as well as realistic about their daughter's ability and offering support, encouragement and praise
- ensuring early contact with school to discuss matters which affect a girl's happiness, progress and behaviour
- giving due importance to homework, and school assessments



- allowing their daughter to take increasing responsibility as she progresses throughout the school

There is regular review of the effectiveness of the curriculum, its teaching, and the progress of the pupils in each course, as well as of individuals.

Last Reviewed and updated July 2019
Next Review July 2020