



CURRICULUM POLICY (including EYFS)

Summary

Northwood College for Girls provides full-time education for pupils of compulsory school age and beyond. Pupils may join Northwood College for Girls from age three in the Early Years and continue their education beyond the compulsory school age in the Sixth Form. At all stages, the school's curriculum is designed in such a way that it offers a programme of activities appropriate to the needs of the pupils with the subject matter being appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils, including any pupils with a statement (Education, Health & Care Plan) or with SEN. All pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress and high expectations are set for all of our students.

In particular, the curriculum is designed to give pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human, and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education and enable them to acquire skills in speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy. Careful attention is paid to ensure that where a pupil has a statement the education provided fulfils its requirements. All pupils receive personal, social, health and economic education, including British values, which reflects the aims and ethos of the school and encourages respect for other people. The school recognises that the curriculum is an important part of its safeguarding responsibilities. In all sections of the school, teachers pay particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. In addition, pupils in the Senior School in particular, are given appropriate careers guidance and are prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life in British society.

The curriculum is designed to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn and make progress. This applies both in school and in the event of a required move to Guided Home Learning (learning undertaken outside of the school premises).

A more comprehensive analysis of the curriculum at Northwood College is set out in the Curriculum Policy below. This policy is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work.

Introduction

Northwood College for Girls is an independent day school for girls aged 3 – 18. Our curriculum is designed to engender a love of learning and provides a firm foundation for future studies in a happy and secure environment. We believe that each girl's time at Northwood College for Girls is of fundamental importance in her development as an individual and we seek to enable each girl to realise her full academic potential and to acquire a sense of personal and social responsibility. Every opportunity is taken to widen the girls' awareness of the world around them and curriculum related visits are frequently arranged.

The school aims to provide the context within which the curriculum policy sits. Our definition of the curriculum is that of the total learning experience offered to each girl by the school. It helps to develop attitudes and values in addition to concepts, knowledge and skills.

It is our aim at Northwood College for Girls to offer a curriculum that encompasses the requirements of the National Curriculum, and that goes above and beyond that which it prescribes. In line with our school aims, we seek to provide a curriculum that is broad and balanced, coherent, relevant and differentiated. The school recognises that the curriculum is an important part of its safeguarding responsibilities and therefore that it should offer equal opportunities for all pupils and reflect the diversity of its population and broader society. It is designed to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and uphold fundamental British values. Our curriculum aims to prepare students for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life and for participation in modern British society. It also aims to encourage students to think beyond their local community to the wider world. Through our curriculum, we aim to develop a girl's meta-cognition and ability to think critically and analytically, through a range of teaching styles and strategies offering a variety of learning opportunities. We also aim to ensure development of essential speaking, listening, numeracy and literacy skills; provide opportunities for creative expression; promote a healthy lifestyle and provide PSHE and Citizenship education reflecting our aims and ethos and fundamental British values. The curriculum encourages respect for all and pays regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. Through our curriculum, we hope to enable all pupils to achieve their individual potential. Our curriculum is delivered by teachers who promote high expectations, display high standards in learning and teaching and possess a real passion for their profession and (where relevant) their subject.

Digital learning is a vital part of our curriculum and is covered through both specific Computer Science lessons and through regular classroom practice. All students in the Senior School use a device in lessons. All Junior students have regular access to a device.

The curriculum is kept under constant review by the Senior Leadership Team, and in particular the Deputy Head (Academic), supported by the Director of Studies and Head of Cognitive and Digital Learning. In the Junior School, curriculum responsibility lies with the JSLT, Deputy Head Junior School, and, with an overview, the Head of Juniors. All key stage workers may also have involvement with this area. In Senior School, Heads of Department also hold curriculum responsibility and in Junior School, Coordinators also hold curriculum responsibility in some areas. Specific working groups, for example on learning transition between the Junior and Senior Schools, student selection of GCSE/A Level options, thinking skills and assessment, are convened as necessary to address specific developments and initiatives. Academic Team, JSLT and Heads of Department meet regularly to discuss issues related to the curriculum across the whole of the school. All members of staff have curriculum responsibility as defined in their terms of appointment.

Junior School Curriculum Overview

In the Junior School we follow a book centred curriculum, where carefully selected literature is used to further strengthen all areas of the curriculum. We are intentional in our choice of books and topic to ensure diversity is represented across the curriculum. Girls explore inspiring women, through our termly Female Focus. Carefully structured links are made between the past, the present and the future, enabling girls to see themselves as trailblazers.

Early Years Foundation Stage: Nursery and Reception

The Early Years' Centre (Bluebelle House) provides education for girls in the Foundation Stage in a secure and caring environment. The curriculum concentrates on 7 areas split between prime and

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specific areas of learning. The prime areas are communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. The specific areas are literacy, mathematics, understanding of the world and expressive arts and design. Thinking Skills is taught as a discrete lesson and girls also have separate lessons in Spanish, Ballet, Music and Yoga. Outdoor learning is closely woven into all areas of learning including our Outdoor Explorers programme. Staff work closely with each child and provide a structured individual programme based on regular and ongoing assessment.

Key Stage 1

The curriculum is designed both to cover and also to extend beyond the Key Stage 1 requirements for the National Curriculum. The foundations of number work are laid in daily lessons using a number of schemes including the National Numeracy Strategy. Girls acquire fluency in reading through the use of a range of schemes and methods. In creative work, themes are chosen, which may be topical, seasonal or stimulated by current events. These are developed in Science, History, Geography, Art, Technology, Physical Education, Music, Spanish and Religious Studies. Thinking Skills is taught as a discrete lesson, as are PSHE and General Knowledge. Appropriate external visits are arranged as well as developing a thirst for outdoor learning. Computing (including coding) is offered to all girls, as are Ballet and Drama. Extra-curricular instrumental lessons are also available.

Key Stage 2

The curriculum is designed to cover and go beyond Key Stage 2 of the National Curriculum. Subjects studied include Mathematics, English, Drama, Science, French, Mandarin, Spanish, Latin, Art, Information Technology, History, Geography, Religious Studies, Music and all branches of Physical Education. Dedicated Computing (including coding) lessons are offered to girls in the Junior ICT Suite. All girls have specialist teachers in Music, PE, MFL and STEM. Thinking Skills is taught as a discrete lesson, as are PSHE and General Knowledge. Girls participate in a programme of external visits to theatres, museums and sites of scientific and historical interest to support classroom based work. Years 4, 5 and 6 take part in residential trips and all girls follow a carefully planned programme of pastoral care.

Key Stage 3

Key Stage 3 is a vital stage in the academic journey, bridging the gap between Junior School and the demands of the GCSE curriculum. Skills and subject knowledge build throughout the key stage, so that by the time they reach Key Stage 4, students are equipped with the requisite study skills, habits of mind, attitude to learning and deep subject knowledge. It is the exciting stage in a student's academic development where joy in learning is unbounded by the expectations of examination and this is to be celebrated. In Years 7 and 8, all girls study English, Mathematics, two modern foreign languages (chosen from French, Spanish and Mandarin), Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and STEM), Geography, History, RS, Latin, Art, Drama, Music, Textiles, Computer Science and PE. A regular PSHE lesson covers careers, citizenship, health education, use of the library and current affairs. Physical Education includes athletics, hockey, netball, rounders, swimming, tennis and gymnastics. In Year 9, girls select 2 languages from Spanish, French, Mandarin and Latin. They begin to follow GCSE Science and Mathematics courses. They also enjoy dedicated STEM lessons, exploring robotics, electronics and design. Careers advice is offered to all girls and all are supported in selecting their GCSE options by teachers, the Head of Year and SLT.

Key Stage 4

GCSE courses are followed throughout KS4. In Years 10 and 11 all pupils study the core subjects, which include English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, at least one Language (Mandarin, Spanish, French or Latin) and either Biology, Chemistry and Physics as separate GCSE subjects or Combined GCSE (two grades). In addition, pupils choose three or four optional subjects from Art & Design, Classical Civilisation, Latin, Drama, French, Geography, History (IGCSE), Computer Science, Music, PE, Religious Studies and Textiles. The PSHE programme gives girls a chance to improve their general knowledge of the world around them, foster a love of learning and the ability to learn transferable skills, such as research without the pressure of examinations. In Year 11 all girls undertake work experience. Careers advice is offered to all girls and all are supported in selecting their A level options by teachers, the Head of Year and SLT.

Sixth Form

In the Sixth Form, students embark on the exciting next stage of their academic journey, specialising in their chosen subjects and supplementing their A level studies with research, study and life skills and experience, to bridge the gap between school and further study. Students take 3 A-levels, (4 if one of those subjects is Further Maths or if it is felt that 4 A levels are appropriate) and an EPQ (Extended Project Qualification). The following subjects are currently offered at A level: Art & Design, Biology, Business, Chemistry, Classical Civilisation, Drama and Theatre Studies, Economics, English Literature, French, Geography, Graphic Design, History, Computing, Latin, Mandarin, Maths, Further Maths, Music, Physical Education, Physics, Politics, Psychology, Religious Studies, Sociology, Spanish and Textiles.

All Sixth Form students also take part in an enrichment programme (Excite), which includes the EPQ, Enrich (PSHE and careers guidance), Engage (beyond-curriculum lessons in the academic subject a student is going on to study at university) and Engage (social and political awareness and community service). To promote fitness and well-being, all girls participate in a range of weekly sporting activities such as golf and yoga, as well as the more traditional PE options. Sixth Form conferences, work experience, interview practice, careers and higher education advice are available to all girls.

Pastoral Programme

Guidance is offered throughout the College on study skills, personal communication and social, emotional and physical development, career choice, decision making, health & safety and enterprise education. Language skills are developed throughout the entire curriculum.

Cognitive Learning

Cognitive Learning means that girls will leave Northwood having achieved their cognitive potential by developing their ability to question, think critically and creatively; decision making and problem-solving in both lessons and the wider world.

Cognitive Learning allows each girl to find out about their own individual learning styles and the methods of study and revision that are most likely to suit them. It gives them tools to direct and clarify their thinking, encourages philosophical reasoning, supports their development as independent learners and encourages critical evaluation of information from media sources.

In the Senior School, teaching and learning strategies that support the development of meta-cognition and associated skills are embedded into lessons under the direction of a dedicated Head of Cognitive Learning. Cognitive learning is, therefore, integrated throughout the curriculum.

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This approach is supported through student activity days and staff training opportunities. In the Junior School, a more directed programme of study, entitled the Thinking Skills Programme. 'The Junior School Thinking Skills Toolbox' provides everyone with a framework to articulate their thoughts effectively and to develop good habits of learning. Girls are introduced to a range of strategies to support their thinking, which include our own bespoke Junior School Habits, De Bono's Six Thinking Hats, graphic organisers, thinking Maps, questioning techniques and Philosophy for Children (P4C).

Careers

Appropriate access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance is provided for girls in Senior School through a dedicated Careers and UCAS advisor. It is impartial, enabling students to make informed choices about a broad range of career options and thereby enabling them to reach their potential. A full careers programme, delivered through PSHE lessons and supported by a Careers Library, is delivered from Year 7 through to Year 13.

Extra-Curricular Activities

The school has a wide and varied programme of academic, cultural and sporting activities that take place outside the formal curriculum in lunchtime and after-school clubs and societies. All pupils are expected to take part in the programme and Sixth Form students are expected to co-ordinate and run activities as part of their personal development.

SEN

A dedicated SEN department supports students with special educational needs. Students are assessed by and work with staff on skills related to their specific needs. Information is disseminated to all staff via Pupil Profiles and regular staff training. SEN students are considered in all results analysis documents and meetings.

EAL

An EAL coordinator works with the SEN department and the Head of English to support students identified as EAL. Information is disseminated to all staff SIMS and regular staff training. EAL students are considered in all results analysis documents and meetings.

MAT

Students identified as MAT are identified through testing scores (eg MidYIS and ALIS), 11+ entry scores and teacher nomination. MAT students are flagged on SIMS and considered in all results analysis documents and meetings. See our MAT and High Flyers Policy for further detail on provision for these students.