

## CURRICULUM POLICY

### Summary

Northwood College provides full-time education for pupils of compulsory school age and beyond. Pupils may join Northwood College 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. All pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress. 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 and health education, which reflects the aims and ethos of the school. [Click here for School Aims](#). (1.2f). 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.

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 is an independent day school for girls aged 3 – 18. Our curriculum is designed to engender a love of learning. It provides a firm foundation for future studies in a happy and secure environment. We believe that each girl's time at Northwood College 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 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 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; our curriculum should offer equal opportunities for all pupils; our curriculum is designed to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils; through our curriculum we hope to enable all pupils to achieve their individual potential; our curriculum aims to prepare students for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life and for participation in modern society; through our curriculum we aim to develop a girl's thinking skills through a range of teaching styles and strategies offering a variety of learning opportunities. We aim to ensure development of essential numeracy/literacy skills; promote a healthy lifestyle; promote high standards in learning and teaching; provide PSHE and Citizenship education reflecting our aims and ethos.

The curriculum is kept under constant review by the Leadership Team, and in particular the Deputy Head with responsibility for Teaching & Learning, the Director of Studies and the Assistant Director of Studies. In the Junior School, curriculum responsibility lies with the Director of Curriculum: Junior School, the Senior Teacher and, with an overview, the Head of Juniors. All key stage workers may also have involvement with this area. In Senior School Heads of Faculty and Heads of Subject, and Coordinators in the Junior School also hold curriculum responsibility. Specific working groups, for example thinking skills and assessment, are convened as necessary to address specific developments and initiatives. All members of staff have curriculum responsibility as defined in their terms of appointment.

All curriculum documentation can be found on the school's intranet.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage: Nursery and Reception**

The Early Years' Centre (EYC) provides education for girls in the Foundation Stage in a secure and caring environment. The curriculum is based on the Foundation Stage early learning goals; personal, social and emotional education; communication; language and literacy; mathematical development; physical development; knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. 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 and these are developed in Science, History, Geography, Art, Technology, Physical Education, Music and Religious Studies. Appropriate external visits are also arranged. ICT 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, German, Spanish, Latin, Art, Design & Technology, Information Technology, History, Geography, Religious Studies, Music and all branches of Physical Education. Dedicated ICT lessons are offered to girls in the Junior ICT Suite. All girls have specialist teachers in Science, Music and PE. 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**

In Year 7 all girls study English, Mathematics, two Modern Foreign Languages chosen from French, German and Spanish, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Geography, History, RS, Art, Drama, Music, Food Technology, Textiles, Resistant Materials, ICT and PE. A weekly skills lesson covers careers, citizenship, Classical Civilisation, health education, use of the library and current affairs. In Year 8 girls take up Latin in addition. Physical Education includes athletics, hockey, netball, rounders, swimming, tennis and gymnastics. During Year 7 girls are

divided into groups across the year according to ability in Mathematics and in Year 9 are placed in ability groups in Science. They are taught in mixed ability groups in all other subjects.

#### **Key Stage 4**

Northwood College prepares girls for the GCSE. In Years 10 and 11 all pupils study the core subjects, which include English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, at least one Modern Foreign Language and either Biology, Chemistry and Physics as separate GCSE subjects or a double GCSE in Core and Additional Science. In addition pupils choose three or four optional subjects from Art & Design, Classical Civilisation, Drama, French, Geography, German, History, Food & Nutrition, ICT, Latin, Music, PE, Religious Studies, Spanish and Textiles. In addition non-examined courses in RS, PE, ICT and thinking skills complete the curriculum. A proactive pastoral programme is arranged for the girls. In Year 11 all girls undertake work experience. Careers advice is offered to all girls in Year 11.

#### **Sixth Form**

In the Sixth Form most students will study 4 subjects at AS level in their first year and continue with 3 of these subjects in the second year to gain the full A level qualification. The following subjects are currently offered at AS and A level: Art & Design, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Classical Civilisation, Drama and Theatre Studies, Economics, English Language & Literature, English Literature, French, Geography, German, Graphic Design, History, Home Economics, ICT, Latin, Maths, Further Maths, Music, PE, Physics, Politics, Psychology, Religious Studies, Spanish and Textiles.

All Sixth Form students also take part in an enrichment programme to further develop the key skills being acquired through their A level studies. This will include critical thinking and a choice of other subjects. Critical thinking is also offered at AS level. Sixth Form conferences, work experience, careers and higher education advice are available to all girls.

#### **Pastoral Programme**

Guidance is offered throughout the College on study skills, personal relationships, career choice, decision making, health & safety and enterprise education. Full details are to be found in the PSHE Policy. All girls have one pastoral lesson each week.

#### **Thinking Skills**

Northwood College's advanced cognitive development programme ensures that each girl, from Nursery to Sixth Form, is given a wide range of opportunities to match her cognitive potential. Thinking skills such as questioning, critical and creative thinking, decision making and problem-solving are integrated throughout the curriculum through the use of our spiral thinking planning model, as described in the magazine *Teaching Thinking and Creativity*. Thinking skills are also taught through specific lessons, courses and activity days. Junior School pupils follow our own "Think" programme of weekly lessons, while girls in the Senior School take part in courses on mind mapping, learning strategies, various thinking tools, critical thinking and memory techniques. Pupils find out about their own individual learning styles and the methods of study and revision that are most likely to suit them. In the Sixth Form, lunchtime courses offer opportunities to learn more about critical and creative thinking, with the AS level Critical Thinking an option for students wishing to take this further.

### **Careers**

Appropriate careers guidance is provided for girls in Senior School (see [staff handbook](#) for details.)

### **Extra Curricular Activities**

The school has a wide and varied programme of cultural and sporting activities that take place outside the formal curriculum. All pupils are expected to take part in the programme.

### **Homework**

See [Homework Policy](#).

### **Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

See [SEN Policy](#).

### **Gifted and Talented**

See [Gifted and Talented Policy](#).

### **Options at GCSE and A Level**

Girls are asked to indicate their preferences of subjects. Option blocks are then set up using these preferences. While we endeavour to make it possible for all girls to study their preferred subjects, this is not always possible.

### **Teaching and Learning**

See Teaching and Learning Code.