

## **Junior School Curriculum Policy (Nursery to Year 6)**

### **Introduction**

In Junior School we aim to provide a curriculum that will enable each girl to achieve her full potential, with enthusiasm and enjoyment, whilst becoming a skilled and independent learner with an intellectual curiosity which equips her for future life.

The taught curriculum is comprised of The National Curriculum and the NHSG Curriculum. We ensure the children have a range of learning experiences that challenge, stimulate and promote thinking and learning using both indoor and outdoor learning spaces.

In their delivery of curricular and extra-curricular activities, staff are encouraged to promote the School's aims and core values alongside the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance. This is done through offering a balanced presentation of opposing views when political issues arise, having clear expectations of behaviour, treating girls equally, listening to their opinions and encouraging them to work collaboratively. Staff are expected to be a role model at all times and to embody the values we hope to instil in our girls. We aim to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress and, through our curriculum delivery and range of extra-curricular activities and experiences, to ensure that they are well prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

### **Aims**

The aims of the curriculum are to:

- promote high standards in reading, writing and mathematics;
- allow girls to develop a knowledge of themselves in time and space;
- enable girls to acquire knowledge and skills in science
- enable girls to be confident in the use of computing and ICT;
- promote spiritual development;
- promote physical and mental development and an awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle;
- enable girls to be aware of the importance of and participate in the arts and related cultural themes;
- enable girls to develop moral sensibility through carefully taught values
- develop the personal and social skills of each girl
- provide equality of access and the opportunity for all girls to make progress;
- prepare girls for the opportunities, responsibilities and experience of adult life.

The curriculum is planned effectively, providing continuity and progression from nursery through to Year 6 and beyond into Senior School. Junior School staff work closely with Senior School colleagues in order to ensure seamless curriculum provision across the whole school. It promotes an enjoyment of learning and a commitment to learning and achieving.

Through the provision of rich and varied activities, we aim to:

- encourage the best possible progress and the highest attainment for all girls;
- enable girls to make connections across different areas of learning;
- help girls to think creatively and solve problems;
- develop pupils' capacity to learn and work independently and collaboratively;
- enable girls to respond positively to opportunities, challenge and responsibility;
- enable girls to acquire and develop a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding.

## **Organisation**

We plan our curriculum in four phases: the Early Years Foundation Stage; Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2.

The curriculum is designed to ensure equal access for all girls and pays due regard to the Inclusion and Learning Support Policy and Equal Opportunities Policy. The Policy also relates to the following: Learning and Teaching Policy; Assessment and Reporting Policy; Subject Policies and Early Years Foundation Stage Policy. There is a carefully structured PSHCE Curriculum across all age groups which reflects the school's aims and ethos. PSHCE encourages respect for other people, with particular regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, namely age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sex, sexual orientation, race, religion and belief, taking the age of the pupils into account as appropriate.

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

Our curriculum for Nursery and Reception is based on the learning and development requirements of the 2021 Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The Nursery and Reception learning environments, activities and experiences offered to the girls promote the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and educational programmes as detailed in the EYFS.

The characteristics of effective learning describe how children learn in the EYFS. They are:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

The seven areas of learning and development describe what children learn in the EYFS. They are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive arts and design

Communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development are the prime areas. We ensure a strong foundation for children's development in these areas, particularly for our youngest children in Nursery. Literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive arts and design are the specific areas. These provide children with a broad, engaging curriculum and opportunities to develop their language and vocabulary. They also prepare children for the learning that is to come in key stage 1 and 2. Further detail about the content of these areas of learning can be found in the statutory framework. Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

When planning activities, experiences and the learning environment, we consider individual needs, interests, development and rates of progress. We use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child. We expect all children to achieve the early learning goals for each area of learning as set out in the EYFS by the end of the Reception year.

Children in the early years learn primarily through play and exploring their own interests. They also learn through adults and the interests that they introduce, encourage and stimulate. As children get older and move through their Reception year they are able to engage more with this adult-led learning, taking on knowledge and skills that will prepare them for the national curriculum subjects in the junior school curriculum.

The majority of the early years curriculum is delivered through child-led exploration and play in a high quality learning environment. Skilled adults maximise the learning opportunities and curricular links as they interact with children. Our taught topics bring planned knowledge and experiences that we want children to have in the early years in order to prepare them for future learning and ensure full coverage of the EYFS educational programmes. These topics are taught through carefully selected core texts, rhymes and creative stimuli, enhancements to continuous provision areas and group or class discussions or activities. Wherever possible we plan opportunities that will enable children to discover new learning for themselves, ask questions and investigate their own ideas. Children are not seen as empty vessels to fill with knowledge and teachers do not always present themselves as experts. Any recording done by the girls is always purposeful and developmentally appropriate, enhancing their learning rather than filling books.

In nursery, taught topics focus on the here and now, the hands on, the real and the relevant. They are carefully chosen to build on children's own knowledge and experience and introduce basic concepts and vocabulary that will be built on throughout the year, the EYFS and the child's junior school education.

In Reception, taught topics build on and utilise the learning that has taken place in Nursery and underpin the national curriculum foundation subjects. Children begin to learn about unfamiliar environments, places further afield, people and events from the past, famous artists, design processes and scientific concepts in more detail, preparing them for what's to come in key stage 1. The Reception topics build on and utilise the learning that has taken place in Nursery.

In both year groups, high quality picture books, stories, rhymes and art are chosen to hook children into the topic. Some of these are studied in detail for several weeks, others form part of the continuous provision or story time selection for that half term. We introduce a new taught topic half termly in order to introduce a wide range of knowledge and vocabulary. However, repetition is an important part of learning and across the early years we emphasise links between experiences and topics and carefully plan the order of learning to maximise this, discussing similarities, differences and prior experiences at every opportunity.

Alongside taught topics, play-based learning through continuous provision enables children to generate and explore their own ideas, interests and imagination. Often this will lead to extended "child-led topics" that hadn't been planned for by the adults. These may be linked to a taught topic or completely separate and are encouraged by adults through the introduction of new texts, enhancements to continuous provision and class and group discussions or activities. In addition, learning will arise from the everyday and unexpected

and is this exploited at every opportunity whether it not it fits with the current taught topic. This results in a very rich and varied curriculum.

As part of the EYFS curriculum we teach phonics daily using Little Wandle revised Letters and Sounds and mathematics based largely on the White Rose Maths scheme of work for Reception. Taking individual development into account and at a gentle pace, we sensitively begin this learning in Nursery so that the girls have the opportunity to deepen and secure their learning in these areas and can make a flying start when they move into Reception.

Forest school and mud kitchen sessions are nature play sessions where children lead their own learning. These are not explicitly linked to the taught topic, although the adults may pose questions and introduce resources that they feel will interest the children or meet their learning needs at any given time and this will include curricular links.

Specialist teaching sessions sit outside main class topics and are adult led. However, where links can be made to learning, for example in Spanish this is encouraged.

### **Key Stage 1 and 2 (Year 1 to Year 6)**

We offer a broad and balanced curriculum for all girls. Our work is based upon national frameworks and is very carefully planned and evaluated to ensure that there is continuity and progression across the Junior School.

The children undertake activities appropriate to their age group, their ability and as part of the school community. Each child is valued as an individual and is encouraged to reach her full potential. Specialist subject teaching is used throughout the School. This includes Music, Performing Arts, Games, PE, Mandarin and Spanish in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 specialist subject teaching includes – Science (Y5 and Y6), Maths (Y6), English (Y6), Spanish, Performing Arts, Mandarin, Games, PE and Music.

Our Curriculum comprises the following subjects: English, Mathematics, Science, Art and Design, History, Geography and Religious Studies, Music, Physical Education, Computing, Spanish, Philosophy for Children, PSCHÉ and Mandarin.

Through this broad curriculum at **KS1 and KS2** our girls experience the following areas:

(a) linguistic and literary (b) mathematical (c) scientific (d) technological (e) physical (f) ethical and moral (g) spiritual (h) aesthetic and creative (i) social

Each of these areas is represented sufficiently in our curriculum to enable it to make its own distinctive contribution to the education of our girls. We have a flexible approach to the planning of the curriculum to enable us to explore a variety of topics and themed weeks. Whilst paying due regard to the core subjects of English and Mathematics, we aim to provide excitement and challenge for all girls.

### **Areas of Learning**

#### **a. Linguistic and Literary**

Opportunities will be provided to ensure that skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing are developed together with other forms of expression such as art, drama and music. It is hoped that the girls will not merely learn to read but also to develop a deep appreciation of literature and love of reading. Similarly, it is hoped that the girls will learn to derive great pleasure from writing in a variety of forms for a range of audiences. Productions of a dramatic nature form part of the curriculum and each year group has its own production. Speaking in public is also encouraged through participation in Harvest Festivals, Carol Services, Assemblies and the school leadership programme.

**b. Mathematical**

The Mathematics is part of the core curriculum includes practical experiences, investigations, discussion and presentation of ideas. Basic concepts will be taught through purposeful and relevant activities, whilst problem solving skills will enrich understanding. Throughout our schemes of work there is a strong emphasis on the consolidation of number and the development of problem solving skills. Girls are monitored closely so that their individual needs are met if their understanding and attainment shows that a different pace and challenge is needed.

**c. Scientific**

In Science, we aim to stimulate curiosity and interest. Girls develop the ability to carry out investigations to stimulate creative thought. In addition to the gradual development and refinement of these investigative skills, we provide the basis for a progressively deepening knowledge and the understanding of scientific concepts. Science also offers girls many opportunities to examine the fundamental questions in life and raise many social and moral questions which girls will have the opportunity to discuss. Technology greatly enhances the teaching of Science to record, present, review, modify and evaluate their work. In Year 5/6 girls study Science in Senior School, taught by our specialist Senior School Science staff in the laboratories.

**d. Technological**

The ability to handle Information Technology equipment is an essential life skill and girls learn to use it with confidence and independence. Girls are timetabled for at least one Computing session per week. A wide range of technological tools are available to aid learning both in and out of the classroom and from Nursery to Year 6.

**e. Physical**

Our girls are given opportunities to develop their Design and Technology capabilities through focused practical activities.

Through gym, games, dance and swimming lessons each girl gradually achieves her physical potential. The girls are encouraged to express themselves in dance,

drama, gymnastics, games and swimming and explore the full range of movement. Specialist teaching takes place for gym lessons. From Year 3 girls have some games lessons on the Senior School site, making use of their hockey astro and netball courts. All girls in KS2 have a weekly swimming lesson and in the summer term athletics is included.

**f. Ethical and Moral**

We regard our school as a community in which positive relationships, attitudes and behaviour are encouraged. Permeating our curriculum are themes that underpin our whole school values such as caring for others, fairness and respect.

**g. Spiritual**

Our girls are encouraged to appreciate the ways in which religious beliefs shape their lives whilst learning about and respecting the faith of others.

**h. Aesthetic and Creative**

We provide opportunities to enable girls to use their own talents and skills in a creative way, through writing, modelling, drawing/painting, music or dance. The promotion of this creativity depends on an understanding of media, the acquisition of certain skills, inventiveness, observation, exposure to excellence and a sensitivity to the work of others. Girls enjoy visits to art galleries and the theatre throughout the year.

**i. Social**

The development of skills in Humanities enables girls to study people from the past and present and to explore the relationships that exist between people and their environment. Through a carefully planned curriculum our girls should begin to understand that we are dependent upon each other and to gain an insight into the patterns and events which change and fashion our lives. We provide a wide range of experiences such as field trips, themed days, visiting workshops all of which play a significant role in our curriculum. Each year group organises visits to support curriculum areas.

**Curricular Enhancement**

The School Curriculum for all year groups is enhanced greatly by the wealth of co-curricular activities on offer in the Junior School and Senior School; an extensive programme of educational visits exists for all year groups linked closely to the curriculum.

**Reviewed August 2021**  
Next Review Date **August 2022**