



NOTTINGHAM
GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL
BE EXTRAORDINARY



CURRICULUM GUIDE
YEARS 7 TO 9
2018-2019

INTRODUCTION

Our Senior School curriculum offers a wide range of subjects which provide an excellent foundation for further study. It is designed to equip girls with the skills to think for themselves. We nurture confidence and independence, and encourage the girls to be active learners who can also work collaboratively in order to develop teamwork and leadership skills.

CURRICULUM

In Years 7 to 9, the curriculum is broad and balanced. Our girls study a core of six subjects: English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology. Geography, History and Religious Studies are taught as separate humanities. All of our girls study French and German in Year 7 and then choose 2 languages from French, German and Spanish to study in Years 8, alongside studying Latin.

In Year 9, they continue with their two languages and Latin lessons. A variety of creative and practical subjects including Art, Music, Design Technology, Physical Education, Computing and PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) are taught to all girls. For Years 7 to 9, most subjects are taught in form groups with smaller groups in lessons like Design Technology. Sets are only used with Mathematics.

ENRICHMENT

Please see the Enrichment Guide for full details of the wide range of enrichment activities related to the subject areas.

TIMETABLE

Each week contains 25 one hour lessons. We use a two-week timetable, so some subjects will have, for example,

three hours tuition per fortnight (two hours one week alternating with one hour the next).

HOMEWORK

We want to empower our pupils to be able to seek solutions to problems and have the confidence to examine issues in an independent way. The key skills for independent learning are information retrieval, planning, analysis and time management. Homework can help consolidate understanding from lessons, provide opportunities for practice, encourage self-discipline and develop skills including research, enquiry and investigation.

However, we recognise the importance of quality time together as a family, especially during weekends and holidays, and understand that journey time to and from school and enrichment activities both in and outside of school need to be taken into account. We aim to achieve a balanced amount of homework each week and provide a realistic, age-appropriate number of tasks that promote effective learning.

WEEKLY HOMEWORK GUIDE FOR YEAR 7:

English:

1 x 30 minutes

Mathematics:

1 x 30 minutes

Sciences:

1 x 20 minutes each (Biology/Chemistry/Physics)

Humanities:

1 x 20 minutes each (History/Geography/Religious Studies)

Languages:

1 x 20 minutes (French and German)

Art:

Up to 1 x 30 minutes (set as required)

Design and Technology / Drama / Music:

15 minutes (set as required)

Computing

1 x 20 minutes

This booklet is intended to give you a brief overview of the current curriculum here at Nottingham Girls' High School. If there is additional information you would like, please do not hesitate to contact us.

ART AND DESIGN

YEARS 7 TO 9 : ONE HOUR PER WEEK

The Art and Design Department aims to develop the girls' awareness and sensitivity to the rich visual world in which they live. We help them to acquire a repertoire of skills with which they cultivate artistic creativity, and to develop a visual language with which they can express ideas, opinions and feelings.

In Years 7-9, we focus on the development of drawing skills, an understanding of different artists, and we work in a range of media. Girls are offered opportunities to experiment with a variety of techniques and processes, including painting, chalk pastels, printing, collage, relief, sculpture, printing work and digital technology.

Alongside the full range of the usual art materials, we have computers, colour printers, scanners and digital cameras available.



BIOLOGY

YEARS 7 TO 9 : ONE HOUR PER WEEK

Biology is a dynamic subject with many topics at the cutting edge of science. We develop scientific curiosity and an awareness of the environment, encourage pupils to question the ethics of modern biological technologies, and help them to enjoy scientific enquiry and develop good practical skills.

In Year 7, topics include levels of organisation in living things, nutrition and healthy eating, reproduction in animals, introduction to investigations, and classification and keys.

In Year 8, there is a strong emphasis on developing scientific skills and girls are introduced to micro-organisms and decomposition (supported by a field trip), food webs and pyramids of numbers, behaviour, variation and inheritance, organs and organ systems and life processes.

In Year 9 the course includes cell structure and transport, cell division and organising plants and animals. As in the other years there is a large emphasis on practical skills and working collaboratively.



CHEMISTRY

YEARS 7 TO 9 : ONE HOUR PER WEEK

Chemistry - the study of atoms, molecules and their interactions - provides an explanation for everyday occurrences in our world.

We encourage enquiry and creativity, promoting a deeper understanding of the nature of science and the scientific process. Contemporary topics such as green chemistry and nanotechnology are studied alongside more fundamental principles. Our philosophy is for the girls to be 'hands on', carrying out practical work wherever possible. Nothing beats the flashes and bangs of a chemical reaction for generating a lively learning environment!

In Year 7, topics include an introduction to the Chemistry laboratory, matter, the Periodic Table and separating techniques.

In Year 8, girls are introduced to acids and bases, metals and materials, chemical changes and the Earth.

In Year 9, the girls build on prior knowledge to gain a deeper understanding of why chemical reactions occur, how atoms behave and the changing atmosphere.



COMPUTER SCIENCE

YEARS 7 TO 9 : ONE HOUR PER WEEK

Like it or not we're living in it - this is the Digital Age. Computer programs have all but infiltrated every aspect of our lives. Computer Scientists theorise, design, develop, and apply the software and hardware for the programs we use day in day out.

Every industry uses computers so naturally computer scientists can work in any. Problems in science, engineering, health care, and so many other areas can be solved by computers. It's up to the computer scientist to figure out how, and design the software to apply the solution. With this at the mind NGHS Computer Science department has developed a curriculum that is innovative, fun and above all transferable to whatever future career your daughter wishes to follow!

Computer Science lessons build resilience, being afraid of failing is not an option and girls learn that getting it wrong is an important step to become an excellent programmer.

Computer Science is fun and engaging, the focus of the curriculum is to find solutions to real world problems and to solve them using a variety of packages and programming languages.

Girls also learn the importance of analysis and design and the need to build robust and workable solutions.



DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

“Design and technology is about providing opportunities for students to develop their capability, combining their designing and making skills with knowledge and understanding in order to create quality products”

The Design and Technology Association 2014

YEARS 7 TO 9 : ONE HOUR PER WEEK

Design Technology offers girls an introduction to Resistant Materials, Textiles Technology and Food Technology. A carousel system enables girls in Years 7 and 8 to spend a third of the year studying each of the three subject areas.

In Year 9, they select two of these and spend half a year on each.

These creative subject areas offer opportunities for students to combine design work with practical skills. The department has four dedicated Design Technology suites, extensive digital resources and specialist software. E-learning and the use of CAD/CAM (computer-aided design and computer-aided manufacture) have been developed through the use of our interactive whiteboard and CNC (computer numerically controlled) manufacturing equipment. We also have a 3D printer, dye sublimation equipment, a heat press and a mug press machine, as well as a fabulous, comprehensively equipped Food Room.

Students are encouraged to enter community and national design competitions.



DRAMA

YEARS 7 TO 9 : ONE HOUR PER WEEK

Drama encourages teamwork, self-discovery, communication and presentation skills. Knowledge and understanding of a wide range of cultural, moral and social issues are integral to the study of this subject, which offers girls opportunities to explore and extend their own creativity.

We have a dedicated Drama Studio, and a multifunctional theatre, ‘The Space’, with many different working rooms.

In Year 7, lessons are structured to enhance communication skills, teamwork and problem solving. Individual creativity is encouraged and nurtured.

In Year 8, devising and improvisation are the main focus. Girls work in groups to produce projects incorporating a wide variety of creative skills, and are expected to keep a creative diary of their work.

In Year 9, girls will refine their performance skills and delve deeper into the devising process, working on a Theatre in Education project which allows them to create and perform plays aimed at Years 5 and 6.

Drama is a popular enrichment activity, and girls from all years are encouraged to be involved in our annual drama and musical productions.



ENGLISH

YEARS 7 TO 9 : THREE HOURS PER WEEK

The study of English underpins work in all other subjects. Our approach embraces challenge and enjoyment, promotes the development of new skills, and encourages revision and consolidation at all levels.

Girls work on a sequence of modules which involve a wide range of activities in the key areas of Speaking and Listening, Reading, Writing and Thinking.

In Years 7 and 8, modules include topics include the Modern Novel (studying *Of Mice and Men* or *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*, for example), Shakespeare (looking at aspects of the Literary Heritage and *The Tempest* and *Macbeth*), Non-Fiction, Original Writing - Narrative and Poetry, and Modern Drama. Girls also take part in the Reading Award Scheme, designed to promote personal reading and encourage wider reading choices.

In Year 9, girls embark on a 'Preparation for GCSE' course. Modules include the initial study of *Romeo and Juliet*, Modern Texts linked to nineteenth century such as aspects of the gothic, understanding non-fiction texts, and unseen poetry.

Enrichment activities which support the subject include reading groups, The Writers' Workshop, Debating Society, Poetry Club, a 'Confident Speaking' course and theatre trips.



GEOGRAPHY

YEAR 7 : THREE HOURS PER FORTNIGHT YEARS 8 AND 9 : ONE HOUR PER WEEK

Geography introduces pupils to the diversity of places and peoples that our planet has to offer. We stimulate girls' interest in their surroundings, and in global events, and help them to make sense of their changing world. They will develop an insight into opposing viewpoints on controversial and topical issues and will learn to justify an informed opinion.

In Year 7, the course covers the physical and human geography of the UK. Girls practise their map skills and study weather and climate, and the Horn of Africa. They look into issues of sustainability to understand how we can live within the biocapacity of the planet.

In Year 8, atlas skills are developed and learning extends to the migration crisis faced by European nations, Russia and issues of energy security, and global water scarcity.

In Year 9, the course includes topics on the changing economy of the UK, tectonic hazards such as volcanoes and tsunamis, and the physical and human geography of SE Asia. There a variety of field trips and outdoor learning incorporated into the KS3 curriculum.



HISTORY

“Those who do not learn from the past are condemned to repeat it.”

George Santayana

YEAR 7 : THREE HOURS PER FORTNIGHT YEARS 8 AND 9 : ONE HOUR PER WEEK

The study of History is not only an opportunity to understand the past, but is also valuable training in the skills of research, assimilation, comprehension and analysis of a wide range of material. It develops the ability to communicate clear and coherent judgements, and enables students to formulate reasoned interpretations.

We choose the most exciting parts of the National Curriculum to study. Most of our units focus on Britain, but European and world events are also covered, particularly when they affect the course of British history.

In Year 7, girls study Britain from the Norman Conquest (1066) up to the end of the Middle Ages (c.1450). They then move on to the Renaissance and Reformation in Britain from 1500, focussing on the Tudors.

In Year 8, we begin with an investigation into the English Civil War (1642), followed by Oliver Cromwell’s Protectorship and the Glorious Revolution. During the second half of the year, we focus on Britain between 1750 and 1900, with particular reference to the Industrial Revolution, and by slavery in the 18th and 19th centuries.

In Year 9, the focus is on the Great War, followed by a detailed study of the Second World War. We also investigate major personalities and events of the 20th century.

LANGUAGES

YEAR 7 : 1.5 HOURS OF FRENCH AND 2 HOURS OF GERMAN PER WEEK

In Year 7: All girls study French and German

YEAR 8 : 2 HOURS EACH OF 2 MFL LANGUAGES CHOSEN FROM FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH PLUS 1 HOUR OF LATIN PER WEEK

YEAR 9 : 2 HOURS EACH OF THE 2 MFL LANGUAGES PER WEEK AND 1 HOUR LATIN

In Year 9, they continue with the three languages studied in Years 8.

Through language we can connect with other people and make sense of our experiences. We raise awareness of the nature of language and language learning, in both the new languages and the mother tongue, and employ a range of teaching strategies which combine the best of new ideas with excellent practice.

Girls are encouraged to take part in various competitions to improve their knowledge, and compete against other linguists nationally. Our highly popular theatre visits from the Onatti theatre group are also an excellent opportunity for girls to be actively involved in speaking the language as well as listening to native speakers.

We offer visits to a German Christmas market for girls in Year 9. Spanish students also have the opportunity to take part in a Spanish trip.



LATIN

YEARS 8 AND 9 : ONE HOUR PER WEEK

Latin provides intellectual challenge and stimulation. It fosters a precise and logical way of thinking and develops problem solving and critical thinking skills. Girls will also develop and refine their English vocabulary and linguistic skills.

We combine the traditional approach of reading, comprehension, and translation with e-learning. This offers a more varied and enjoyable course which boosts confidence in the reading of Latin literature and extends the appreciation of a culture that has had a profound effect on modern life.

A Classics Club is open to girls in Year 7 in the Summer term, Classical Greek is offered as a lunchtime club, and girls in all years are encouraged to develop their oral skills by taking part in the local Latin Reading Competition.

A Classics trip to Greece or Italy takes place every other year.



MATHEMATICS

“Pure mathematics is, in its way, the poetry of logical ideas” Albert Einstein

YEARS 7 TO 9 : THREE HOURS PER WEEK

We aim to foster a positive attitude to Mathematics in every girl, enabling her to think and communicate precisely, logically and creatively. In this way she will acquire a firm foundation for further study of the subject, and of other subjects which require a sound mathematical background. Topics covered include number work, algebra, shape and space, probability and statistics.

We have a flexible approach to teaching methods and use a variety of approaches which are adapted to suit the girls in the group. Teaching is differentiated to meet the needs of the students and takes into account their various learning styles.

In Years 7 to 9 the girls are taught in sets. This enables us to ensure that each girl is working at a pace which suits her and which maximises her potential. The settings are reviewed regularly and adjusted if necessary. A Drop-in Clinic is available for any girls needing extra help.

We offer a range of mathematics-related enrichment opportunities from Year 7 upwards, including Maths Club and Cipher Club.



MUSIC

YEARS 7 TO 9 : ONE HOUR PER WEEK

We introduce the girls to a wide variety of musical styles, including classical orchestral music, opera, contemporary and world music.

We incorporate listening, performing and composing activities. Girls learn how to work both independently and in small groups. They are encouraged to perform in front of others and all compositions are recorded to allow for self-evaluation.

In Year 7, girls study rhythm and the elements of music, Indonesian gamelan music and musical notation, and investigate primary triads and their use in different styles of music.

In Year 8, girls study Reggae, including the style, background and context, together with rondos, motifs and minimalism, and folk music from around the world.

In Year 9, we introduce music from 1600-1900, as well as Jazz and Blues and an introduction to 'Sibelius'. A study of musical theatre is followed by a performance based project.

Music also provides many enrichment opportunities in school including choirs, small ensembles, bands and orchestras. All girls are encouraged to audition for the annual school musical which is a fully-staged event in 'The Space'.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

YEARS 7 TO 9 : TWO HOURS PER WEEK

Physical Education builds self-confidence, personal integrity and respect for others. We offer a wide range of individual and team sports and foster an interest in physical activity which we hope the girls will build on throughout their lives.

In Year 7 and 8 activities include athletics, cricket, dance, football, gymnastics, hockey, netball, rounders, rowing, swimming (Year 7 only) and tennis. We introduce badminton and basketball in Year 9. As part of our 'Sport for All' philosophy, girls are encouraged to join enrichment clubs which include archery, creative dance, fencing, orienteering, self-defence, table tennis, volleyball and yoga - and our new 'outdoor learning' area will include low ropes, a bush craft area and a climbing wall! There really is something for everyone!

Our school teams compete at local, county and national level and have a very impressive record!



PHYSICS

YEARS 7 TO 9 : ONE HOUR PER WEEK

Albert Einstein gave the best description of the true nature of Physics when he said, “The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existence. One cannot help but be in awe when one contemplates the mysteries of eternity, of life, of the marvellous structure of reality. It is enough if one tries merely to comprehend a little of this mystery each day.”

Physics explores the nature of everything, from the subatomic to the universal. It asks questions, seeks answers, develops theories and then asks more questions that seek to further develop our understanding of the very building blocks of the Universe.

Throughout Years 7, 8 and 9 Pupils will explore a range of fundamental Physics topics that include Mechanics, Forces, Energy, Work, Electricity, Magnetism, Waves and Space. These form a solid grounding from which to embark upon the GCSE course.



PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH AND ECONOMIC (PSHE)

YEARS 7 TO 9 : ONE HOUR PER WEEK

Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education is a planned programme of learning opportunities and experiences that help young people grow and develop as individuals and as members of families and of social and economic communities.

It equips students with clear knowledge, understanding and practical skills to live healthy, safe, productive, fulfilled, capable and responsible lives. It also enables them to reflect on and clarify their own values and attitudes, and explore the complex and sometimes conflicting range of values and attitudes in today's world.

Themes include:

- Sex and relationships (personal identities, feelings and emotions; developing and maintaining positive relationships; dealing with negative relationships; how to communicate effectively; making responsible choices).
- Health (healthy lifestyles; healthy eating and exercise; mental and emotional health; drug, alcohol and tobacco education).
- Diversity (religious, race, gender and sexual orientation; prejudice and discrimination).
- Personal finance (savings, debt management and budgeting).

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

YEAR 7 : THREE HOURS PER FORTNIGHT YEAR 8 AND 9 : ONE HOUR PER WEEK

Religious Studies promotes an awareness of the spiritual dimension and introduces pupils to the varied nature of religion. We teach girls to respect the diversity of world faiths and help them to identify and explore questions about the relevance of religion to modern society. We also encourage them to reflect on the religious responses to moral issues, and to consider such responses in relation to practical issues in personal and social life, in particular care and concern for people and the environment.

In Year 7, topics covered include an introduction to world faiths, philosophy of religion and forgiveness. They have a chance to study prayer and pilgrimage in Islam and worship in Hinduism. Students visit a variety of different places of worship throughout the year.

In Year 8 students are introduced to the religious and philosophical concepts of Buddhism. They will have the opportunity to delve into the exciting world of C S Lewis' Narnia and investigate the way women are portrayed in the Bible through story. They will have the opportunity to discuss ethical issues with students from other countries via live video link.

In Year 9 Students are introduced to issues of morals and ethics, with a focus on medical ethics and genetics and prejudice. Students study Judaism and the Holocaust with a visit to Beth Shalom. Later in the year there is an introductory course on the GCSE topic of Crime and Punishment.

CAREERS

Careers provision has been a strength at our school for many years. We provide career guidance and advice to all age groups with formal advice starting in Year 9 delivered by our Head of Careers who is a qualified Careers Adviser. Girls from Year 9 - 13 have easy access to the Careers Adviser who is based in our well-equipped careers room all year.

We want our girls to have as much information as possible on various careers opportunities through talks, careers evenings and visits. Before the girls choose their GCSE options in Year 9, we offer a programme to inform their decision-making process. Our Options Evening helps give both the girls and their parents information on individual subjects and the choice process. Year 9's 'Take your Daughter to Work' day provides valuable insight into the world of work and the Business Enterprise day helps improve teamwork, decision making and presentation skills.

Girls in Year 11 receive complete support when they decide on their A Level courses. They can opt to seek guidance from Head of Careers and attend one-to-one interviews with our Senior Leadership Team to discuss their progress, interests and options. They are encouraged to undertake a work experience placement after their GCSE examinations and throughout Sixth form.

Girls in Years 9 to 13 are invited to attend careers talks throughout the year given by NGHS alumnae, parents and other professionals who are keen to share their experiences and knowledge with our students. In addition, every two years, representatives from top universities and a wide range of professional career areas, both local and national, join us at our careers fair. Girls and parents in Years 9 to 13 are welcome!



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Girls' Day
School Trust