



NOTTINGHAM
GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

A young girl in a school uniform is laughing joyfully in a classroom. She is wearing a dark blue blazer over a light blue shirt. Her hair is tied up in a bun with a pink hair tie. She is sitting at a desk, and another student is partially visible next to her. The background shows a classroom with colorful posters on the wall.

CURRICULUM GUIDE
YEARS 7 TO 9
2020-2021

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.

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.

Homework timetables for each year group are available on Firefly.

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 to 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

In Biology we aim to spark a sense of wonder and awe for a subject that not only teaches us about the workings of the human body, but also promotes an appreciation for, and connection to, the living world around us.

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 whilst developing good practical skills.

In Year 7 topics include levels of organisation in living things, sexual reproduction in animals, muscles and bones and ecosystems alongside introduction to investigations and the development of practical techniques.

In Year 8 there is a strong emphasis on developing scientific skills and girls are introduced to food and nutrition, reproduction in plants, breathing and respiration and micro-organisms.

In Year 9 the course includes cell structure and transport, cell division and organisation in 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 Chemistry, Mixtures and Separation, Acids and Alkalis, The Particle Model and Atoms, Elements and Molecules

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

The Computer Science curriculum equips pupils with the computational skills and creativity to understand and change the world. It ensures that pupils become digitally literate – able to use technology, express themselves and develop their ideas through technology in preparation for the future workplace and to become active participants in a digital world.

In Year 7 we show how to get the most out of the technology available and stay safe online. We teach algorithmic thinking with the use of Flowol and create programs in fun languages such as Kodu and Scratch. Even controlling our Lego Robots!

In Year 8 we develop understanding of how the technology works, look at the interesting world of Cyber Crime and how to keep ourselves secure and begin text based programming with Python.

In Year 9 we take programming in Python further, create web sites using HTML and investigate big data and databases. We teach communication and networks, including how the internet works.

There is an opportunity to develop further skills at our Code Club as well as join our digital leaders championing online safety.

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

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.

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 a Reading Passport programme, designed to promote personal reading and encourage critical engagement with a range of fiction and non-fiction text types.

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, Book Club 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 focuses on sustainability at different scales. It gives the girls an overview of the key challenges facing humanity and teaches them how we can mitigate and adapt to these to stay within the biocapacity of the planet. Real world case studies are used to emphasise the impacts on both people and the natural world. Girls also practise their map skills, including scale, direction and grid references.

In Year 8, the girls learn about the different factors which affect a country's level of development, to help them make sense of the world. They also study tectonic hazards, with an in depth look at the impacts of the volcanic eruption on Montserrat, and the tsunami that hit Japan.

In Year 9, the course includes topics on Oceans, ranging from disputed territory to coral reefs, and then a unit on the physical and human geography of 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
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.



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'.

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).

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, rowing and tennis. We introduce badminton and basketball in Year 9.

As part of our “Sport for All” philosophy, girls are encouraged to join as many extracurricular clubs as they can! Our enrichment programme provides girls with a wide range of opportunities which include our traditional games, emerging sports and our exciting outdoor learning facilities. There really is something for everyone! #no limits

Our school teams compete regularly and have a very impressive reputation of success at county, regional and national level.

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.

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!

CURRICULUM AT A GLANCE

Subject	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English Language	✓	✓	✓
English Literature	✓	✓	✓
Maths	✓	✓	✓
French	✓	Students choose two languages from French, German and Spanish	
German	✓		
Spanish			
Latin		✓	✓
Biology	✓	✓	✓
Chemistry	✓	✓	✓
Physics	✓	✓	✓
Geography	✓	✓	✓
History	✓	✓	✓
Philosophy, Religion and Ethics	✓	✓	✓
Art	✓	✓	✓
Computer Science	✓	✓	✓
Design Technology	✓	✓	✓
Drama and Theatre Studies	✓	✓	✓
Music	✓	✓	✓
Recreational PE	✓	✓	✓
PSHE	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.		

NEXT STEPS

Subject	Year 10	Year 11
	Students choose 9 GCSEs made up from: (✓ - compulsory ○ - options):	
English Language	✓	
English Literature	✓	
Maths	✓	
French	We encourage students to choose at least one modern foreign language	
German		
Spanish		
Latin		
Biology	Students choose at least two Science subjects	
Chemistry		
Physics		
Geography	We encourage students to choose at least one humanity	
History		
Philosophy, Religion and Ethics		
Art	○	
Computer Science	○	
Design Technology	○	
Drama and Theatre Studies	○	
Music	○	
Physical Education	○	
Recreational PE	✓	✓
PSHE	✓	✓

Progressive. Creative. Different.



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