

Curriculum Synopsis – Senior School and Sixth Form

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Responsible for Initiating Review of Policy	Assistant Head - Academic
Committee to Review	SLT
Last Review Date	August 2025
Review Period	Annual
Approved by (Committee and Date)	SLT August 2025
Approved by Board of Governors	JEC
Effective Date of Policy	September 2025
Next Review Date	August 2026
Related Policies	Curriculum Policy Statement – Senior School and Sixth Form

Lower School Curriculum (Years 7 and 8)

The Lower School schemes of work in the Senior School are informed but not constrained by the National Curriculum. The Lower School schemes of work promote the acquisition of speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. We provide a broad and balanced programme to include mathematics, English Language and Literature, science, technology, ICT, French, Spanish, Latin, history, Geography, religious studies, art, music, drama and physical education. The three sciences are taught discretely but by the same teacher in Years 7 and 8. All students have a weekly PSHE lesson and a 'student time' period that between them cover the mandatory PSHE requirements and include citizenship aspects. These are also delivered across the curriculum and embedded in schemes of work for religious studies, geography and history. Cross-curricular themes are pursued regularly with an emphasis upon breaking down barriers between subjects and the development of cross-curricular projects. Pupils select their GCSE options during Year 8.

Upper School Curriculum (Years 9, 10 and 11)

The curriculum in Years 9, 10 and 11 is linked to the GCSE syllabi. Year 9 is a foundation year. More curriculum time on option subjects prepares students more thoroughly for the demands of GCSEs without sacrificing the space and time to enrich the curriculum and their wider experience of school life. Schemes of work in Year 9 allow pupils to develop a deeper understanding of options subjects, explore topics of particular interest and have fun with learning. Attainment is measured against GCSE criteria from the outset however GCSE content is introduced only in the later stages of Year 9. This gives pupils time to assimilate new skills and develop the intellectual maturity necessary to perform as well as possible.

At present, unless there are extenuating circumstances, all students complete GCSE syllabuses in English (Language and Literature), mathematics, a language, all three sciences and a humanity subject. They choose other option subjects according to their interests, future career plans and the confines of the timetable. We advise girls to study as broad a curriculum as possible at this stage. The option system allows the flexibility for a student to study an additional humanity or a second language or an additional creative subject. The majority of students take 9 subjects while a minority takes 8. At the end of Year 9, some students will follow a separate science route leading to three separate science grades in Year 11 and 10 GCSE grades overall. Others will work towards a Science Trilogy (combined science) qualification giving them two grades and a total of 9 GCSE grades overall. Students with English as an additional language are assessed on entry and if necessary, have additional EAL tuition in place of one option subject, usually but not always a language option. These students have the option to take an IELTS qualification in addition to IGCSE English and English Literature. If appropriate and subject to ability and demand, students are able to study for an additional qualification such as Level 2 Further Mathematics, a GCSE in Statistics, a GCSE in their native language or a certificate in Classical Greek outside normal curriculum time. All students undertake the taught element the Level 2 Higher Project Qualification in Year 10 and are offered the opportunity to complete it.

Those on reduced GCSE programmes are given additional tailored support during a proportion of their released lesson time. This core subject support is usually given by the SENDCo, a member of the Learning Support team, a qualified teacher or where necessary a personal tutor. Any amendments to a student's programme are made on the basis of a special educational need and by mutual agreement with parents.

The Lower School and Upper School Curriculum

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
English	5	5	6	7	7
Maths	5	5	6	6	6
Biology	5 science	2	3	4	3
Chemistry		2	4	3	3
Physics		2	3	3	4
					4 of the following option subjects
Computing	2	2	4	4	4
Geography	2	2	4	4	4
History	2	2	4	4	4
RS	2	2	4	4	4
French	3	3	4	4	4
German	0	0	0	0	4
Spanish	2	2	4	4	4
Latin	2	2	4	4	4
Art	2	2	4	4	4
Art Textiles			4	4	4
Music	2	1	4	4	4
Drama	2	2	4	4	4
DT/Textiles	2	2	4	4	4
PE GCSE			4	4	4
PE Core	4	4	4	4	3
PSHE	1	1	1	1	2
Student time/ assembly	2	2	2	2	2
TOTAL	45	45	45	45	45

Religious Education / Ethics

Irrespective of their personal commitment or belief, girls attend lessons of religious education or ethics up to and including Year 8. Religious Studies is available as a GCSE and A Level option and moral and ethical issues form a core component in the PSHE programme for all students in Years 9, 10 and 11. The Sixth Form PSHE programme includes discussion of ethics and moral issues. The work covered is wide ranging both in approach and content. By studying many faiths, it is hoped that the girls develop an understanding and appreciation of diverse views and beliefs, and a spiritual dimension. The School does not ever seek to impose specific views on any of the students but rather to widen their horizons in order that they can make their own choices.

Computing

Our high-quality computing education equips pupils to use computational thinking and creativity to understand and change the world. Computing is taught in Years 7 and 8 and Computer Science is an option subject at GCSE and A level. Computing has deep links with mathematics, the sciences, and design and technology, and provides insights into both natural and artificial systems. The core of computing is computer science, in which pupils are taught the principles of information and computation, how digital systems work, and how to put this knowledge to use through programming. Building on this knowledge and understanding, pupils are equipped to use information technology to create programs, systems and a range of content. Computing also ensures that pupils become digitally literate – able to use, and express themselves and develop their ideas through, information and communication technology – at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world.

Careers Education

The School has an extensive programme of careers education which starts in Year 7 in the PSHE and student time programmes and continues throughout the Senior School and the Sixth Form. The Head of Sixth Form oversees the careers programme. The Head of Sixth Form and the Sixth Form tutors are responsible for Higher Education careers education. The School uses Unifrog from Year 7, and additional printed resources are available in the Learning Resource Centre and the Sixth Form. Close liaison with parents/carers ensures that they are well-equipped to help young people to make informed career choices. The School considers this part of its curriculum to be exceptionally important and prides itself on providing all its students with the best possible individual careers education and guidance at all times.

Curriculum Review

All staff share the responsibility for delivering the curriculum. It is the responsibility of each Head of Department to ensure that schemes of work are produced and regularly updated. The process of assessment and evaluation is continuously reviewed in light of current educational thinking.

Year 7 and 8

Bespoke Programme, including a careers taster workshop in the autumn term run by an external provider, and online careers testing in January Year 8 before options are chosen.

Years 9, 10 and 11

Evolve Programme, including several industry-focus days, a 'What is a university?' event and online careers testing to inform A Level option choices. There are also 'Looking Ahead to Sixth Form' and 'Experience Sixth Form Subjects' events.

The Sixth Form Curriculum

The Sixth Form curriculum offers a flexible programme allowing students to choose combinations of subjects and supporting enrichment activities that are appropriate to their individual needs and aspirations. Further details of the Sixth Form subjects and arrangements can be found in the Sixth Form Booklet updated each autumn term and available from Admissions.

The Sixth Form curriculum comprises the following 25 A level subjects, with a period allocation of 8 x 40 minute periods per week.

Art and Design: Fine Art	Economics	Mathematics
Art Textiles	English Literature	Music
Biology	French	PE
Business	Further Mathematics	Physics
Chemistry	Geography	Politics
Classical Civilisation	German	Psychology
Computer Science	History	Religious Studies
Design and Technology: Resistant Materials	Latin	Spanish
		Theatre Studies

Lower Sixth students may also take an A level in native language, the preparation for which takes place outside the timetable, beginning in the autumn term.

Sixth Form students attend two periods of PE lessons and two periods of Professional and Life Skills sessions, which include visiting lectures on a range of topics.

A level subjects have a standard allocation of 8 x 40 minute periods per week. Subjects with low numbers are taught on a reduced period allocation. We reserve the right not to run subjects with very low numbers.

All Lower Sixth students undertake an Extended Project Qualification in addition to their academic subjects, receiving taught sessions at points throughout the year, before submitting the project in the summer term. During their time in the Sixth Form, all students follow the BOLD programme, which equips the girls with the skills necessary to thrive in their professional and personal lives. We expect the girls to fulfil key requirements under the following headings: 'Going Beyond'; 'Exploring Opportunities'; 'Taking Leadership'; 'Personal Development'.