

SENIOR HOUSE CURRICULUM POLICY DURHAM HIGH SCHOOL

This policy should be read in conjunction with: Careers Education and Guidance Policy; Gifted and Talented Policy; SEND Policy.

Durham High School for Girls is a school with an academic curriculum where standards and achievements are high. In line with the School aims, we concentrate through the curriculum on developing girls' individual abilities and confidence, enabling every pupil to achieve her potential.

We are keen to ensure that girls receive a broad and balanced education and that they undertake a wide range of educational experiences aimed at enriching and extending their abilities and understanding. Great emphasis is placed on the importance of an all-round education with a balance of Arts, Sciences, practical and creative subjects. Classroom activities are often supplemented by excursions, theatre visits, workshops, field trips and study days.

The broad and balanced curriculum has been planned to incorporate the following:

- to encourage and stimulate the best possible progress and the highest attainment for all pupils taking into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils;
- to develop pupils' enjoyment of, appetite for and commitment to learning and achieving;
- to equip pupils with the essential learning skills of literacy, speaking and listening, numeracy, computing and information technology and the skills to enquire and make connections across areas of learning;
- to build on pupils' strengths and interests and develop their confidence in their capacity to learn and work independently and collaboratively;
- to enable pupils to think creatively and critically and to solve problems;
- to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development including awareness and understanding of, and not undermining, the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- to develop pupils' physical skills and encourage them to recognise the importance of pursuing a healthy lifestyle and keeping themselves and others safe;
- to allow pupils to access impartial, accurate and up to date careers advice allowing them to make informed choices and achieve their potential; and
- to provide effective preparation for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

Where a pupil has a statement of SEN or an Education, Health and Care Plan, we aim to provide education which fulfils its requirements.

In all year groups pupils who have English as a second language are given specialist support if parental approval is received. Specialist support is also provided for pupils with a Specific Learning Difficulty if their parents request it and if they have an educational psychologist's report.

The timetable in Senior House follows a 5 x 65 minute day, 25 periods per week, over a two week schedule.

Spiritual and Moral Curriculum

Durham High School for Girls is an Anglican foundation and is committed to providing a Christian education for its pupils. Teaching about Christianity in RE lessons is given high priority and is delivered alongside teaching of other faiths and philosophies at appropriate stages.

Most days begin with an act of worship where pupils have the opportunity to explore spiritual and moral issues.

All departments are required in their schemes of work to ensure that the spiritual and ethical dimension of a topic is embraced. There are also many opportunities for pupils to grow spiritually eg Christian Union, Confirmation classes, Holy Communion services (both optional and whole school).

Great emphasis is placed on promoting Christian values in every possible way, thus creating a community where utmost value is placed on each individual (see policy on Spiritual and Moral Development).

PSHE

Delivery of PSHE reflects the Aims of Durham High School and its ethos and takes account of the government's *Every Child Matters* agenda. 'Lifetracks' materials are used to deliver PSHE in KS3 and KS4. Careers education is embedded in the PSHE curriculum from Year 7 onwards; citizenship topics are also taught. (See PSHE Scheme of Work).

Key Stage 3

Pupils in Years 7 to 9 broadly follow the National Curriculum with the addition of Latin and Drama; at present Design and Technology is not offered. Most subjects are taught in mixed ability groups with the exception of Mathematics, which places girls in sets from Year 7. French is set from Year 8. Science, English and Latin/Classics have sets from Year 9. All girls start French as their first MFL in Year 7 and all have the opportunity to begin studying Spanish in Year 8.

Science is taught as three discrete subjects: Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

The various strands of Art and Design (Fine Art, Textiles and Graphic Design) are all taught as discrete subjects.

Teaching groups are rarely more than 24 pupils, and the average teaching group size at KS3 is around 20.

The curriculum structure per fortnight at Key Stage 3 is as follows:

	Eng	Ma	Fr	Sp	Lat	Geo	Hist	RE	Bio	Che	Phy	Mus	Dra	PE	Art	Comp	PSHE
Y7	5	5	3	-	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	5	3	2	2
Y8	5	5	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
Y9	6	6	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	-	4	3	1	1

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4 all girls follow a core curriculum of English (Language and Literature), Mathematics, Science (Separate Sciences or combined Science) and at least one Modern Foreign Language. (This may be French or Spanish). All girls must study at least one humanity (History, Geography or Religious Studies). 9 or 10 subjects are normally taken at GCSE at the end of Year 11. In some years a Level 2 qualification in Further Maths is offered.

GCSE subjects do not form the whole curriculum at Key Stage 4. Those who do not take Religious Studies at GCSE will continue with a general course covering a wide range of issues. Physical Education remains an important part of the curriculum. A carousel in PSHE and Citizenship is also followed, covering study skills, health education, economic understanding and careers education.

The following subjects are currently available as options at GCSE:

- Art and Design: Art / Textiles / Graphic Design
- Classical Civilisation (may run some years)

- Computing
- Classical Greek (run as an after school activity)
- Geography
- History
- Physical Education
- Latin
- Music
- Religious Studies
- Drama

However, if fewer than six pupils opt for a subject it may not run.

GCSE subjects at Key Stage 4 have a timetable allocation of 4 or 5 x 65 minutes per fortnight per subject, such that if they have 4 in Year 10 they will have 5 in Year 11, or vice versa. Maths and English have an allocation of 7 x 65 minute lessons.

GCSE teaching groups do not normally exceed 20 pupils and for option subjects are often smaller.

Sixth Form

The majority of students start with 4 A level subjects in Lower Sixth with a small number of students taking 5 or 3 subjects. In Upper Sixth the vast majority of students continue with 3 subjects to Advanced Level. With the linear specifications students will not take AS exams.

The availability of subjects may vary from year to year depending on student choices. Subjects currently offered at A Level are:

- Art and Design: Fine Art, Textiles, Photography or Graphics
- Biology
- Business Studies
- Chemistry
- Classics: Latin, Greek and Classical Civilisation
- Computing
- English Literature
- Geography
- Government and Politics
- History
- Mathematics and Further Mathematics
- Modern Languages: French and Spanish
- Music
- Physical Education
- Physics
- Psychology
- Religious Studies

Most subject combinations can be accommodated, though if fewer than 4 students opt for a subject it may not run. A level teaching groups are on average 10 students and do not normally exceed 14 students.

A Level subjects have a 9 x 65 minute timetable allocation per fortnight, unless there are fewer than 4 students, in which case they would normally have 7 or 8 lessons.

Enrichment in the Sixth Form

Enrichment in the Sixth Form is designed to give the students a breadth to their studies and to encourage them to consider some major issues before they leave for further education or employment. Topics vary each year but typically include interview skills, preparation for STEP papers, study skills for the extended project, survival cookery, science debating, conversational French, current affairs, philosophy and ethics and Life Skills/PSHE. Also offered is a wide range of

physical activities, and Lower Sixth students are expected to choose at least one physical education option, and one with a religious studies element. These take place on Wednesday afternoons.

On Fridays students have a session devoted to careers, or UCAS preparation. On some of these Friday sessions a lecture of general interest to Sixth Form students is organised.

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