



South Hampstead High School Junior School Curriculum Policy

Introduction

At SHHS, girls will experience a rich, academic curriculum and a broad extra-curricular programme which together promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development, thereby preparing girls for the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities of their next stage of education and, in the future, their adult lives. This policy lays the foundation for the whole curriculum, both formal and informal, and forms the context in which all other policy documents should be read.

School Aims

At South Hampstead we aim to create an aspirational culture for all. Our pupils are encouraged to aim high, and to develop the confidence and tenacity to make their dreams a reality. We aim to foster intellectual spark, creativity and debate, and real joy in learning.

We aim to provide outstanding breadth of opportunity in our curricular and extra-curricular programme and to open our pupils' minds to a myriad of possibilities. Our extra-curricular activities are based on the principle of inclusive excellence: we believe that involvement in school life is a key factor in our pupils' happiness and the development of all-important life skills.

We aim to create a happy, tolerant and kind community where girls can be themselves. We want them all to play their part in the life of the school and in wider society. Our pupils should leave us as confident, adaptable, and pioneering young women ready to make their mark on the world and to lead happy and successful lives.

How We Achieve These Aims

STAFF work towards supporting the school's aims by:

- Providing a challenging and stimulating programme of study, designed to enable all girls to reach the highest standards of personal achievement
- Recognising and being constantly aware of the needs of each individual girl
- Reinforcing the school's ethos in promoting growth mind-set, grit and learning from mistakes
- Ensuring that learning is progressive and continuous
- Being good role models – well prepared and organised
- Maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of the curriculum

- Having a positive attitude to change and the development of their own expertise
- Working collaboratively with a shared philosophy and demonstrating common practice across the school

GIRLS work towards supporting the school's aims by:

- Attending school regularly
- Being punctual and ready to begin lessons on time
- Being organised; bringing necessary equipment and meeting homework deadlines
- Behaving appropriately in line with the school Behaviour Policy
- Taking responsibility for their own learning
- Engaging with the school's ethos to develop the ability to learn from mistakes and become resilient learners
- Having high expectations of her own learning, seeking challenge and striving to achieve their best

PARENTS work towards supporting the school's aims by:

- Ensuring that girls attend school, regularly and punctually
- Supporting the role of the teacher and decision of the school made in line with policy
- Engaging openly about their daughter's learning and progress and working with the school to offer support, encouragement and praise
- Ensuring early contact with school to discuss matters which affect a girl's happiness, progress and behaviour
- Giving due importance to homework, hearing reading and supporting girls in their learning at home
- Allowing their daughter to take increasing responsibility as they progress throughout the school, encouraging them to become independent learners

Our Curriculum

Our curriculum is key to securing the School's Aims, and particularly in ensuring our pupils are encouraged to aim high and develop the confidence and tenacity to make their dreams a reality. With a focus on Awe and Wonder, supported by a rigorous progression of skills and knowledge, we aim to foster intellectual spark, creativity and debate, and real joy in learning.

Our curriculum is dynamic, progressive, and fluid. We will always make adjustments to meet the needs of year groups, classes, and individual girls. It is broad, balanced, and designed to engage, challenge and inspire our girls.

The curriculum in both sections of the school aims to provide our pupils with a rich experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human, and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education. It is designed to provide stimulation and subject matter appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs (SEN) or those students with an EHC plan. The content and delivery of our curriculum does not discriminate against pupils with the relevant protected characteristics found in the Equality Act 2010.

We believe that the range of subjects in each year group leads to a powerful combination of solid academic grounding and flexibility which caters to the individual needs of pupils. They will acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy.

Throughout our curriculum, as appropriate to age of pupil, we actively promote British values and effective preparation for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society, in accordance with the statutory requirements. Further details can be found in the Promotion of British Values and Prevention of Radicalisation Policy, PSHEE schemes, and subject-specific schemes of work. Our PSHEE schemes of work also encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage

(Please also refer to the EYFS policy)

The Early Years Foundation Stage, which underpins the curriculum in SHHS' Reception class, is distinct in its identity. The curriculum is planned in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021.

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape the educational programme in Reception. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting the girl's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the prime areas, are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

The girls are also supported in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design.

The characteristics of learning below underpin all seven areas:

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

KS1 – KS2 Curriculum

Our curriculum provides the girls with an exceptionally high level of academic challenge. Our girls are expected to master the expectations of the Primary National Curriculum whilst also encountering concepts that most children would not meet until later in their education.

The core subjects of English, Maths are given the most teaching time. In addition, Science, Geography, History, Computing, Music, Art, French, PE, RE and PSHEE are also taught throughout the Junior School.

In the Junior school, girls are taught by their class teacher wherever possible, the relationship between a child and their class teacher is vital in terms of pastoral care. In addition, we have a number of specialist subject teachers, for example, Art, Music, Science Physical Education, French and Debating in Years 5 and 6.

In Maths and English, the National Curriculum (2014) provides a starting point, however our schemes of work are designed to extend our girls far beyond that, with a focus on depth and mastery. Girls of all ages have access to stretch and challenge including problem-solving and reasoning.

Our expectation is that by the end of Year 6, girls will be significantly exceeding the national expectations for their year group therefore the curriculum across the Junior School has been modified to provide challenge for all, as well as in order to meet the needs of the more able learner.

South Hampstead Junior School has a bespoke scheme of work for PSHEE which is delivered by class teachers but is also reinforced through assemblies, circle time, subject teaching, charity/community involvement, guest speakers and class roles and responsibilities. In addition, discrete lessons are provided to cover personal safety, online safety, sex and relationships education (SRE) and health (including drugs education).

Teaching and Learning

At South Hampstead Junior School, we recognise that the following are aspects of effective teaching:

- A clear focus and purpose to lessons
- Lessons that are well paced
- Well organised resources
- Appropriate and targeted questioning
- Planning informed by assessment
- Clear, constructive feedback
- An environment in which speaking, listening and other basic skills are an integral part of the curriculum
- Opportunities to consolidate previous knowledge and skills
- Quality of relationships
- Knowledge of the subject
- Knowledge of the child
- Shared aims, with the child, support staff and parents
- Clear, high expectations.

We also understand that effective learning takes place when pupils:

- Understand and take responsibility for their own learning journey
- Think deeply about the subject
- Show they understand by doing something they have not done before
- Apply previous learning in a new context
- Clearly enjoy the learning process
- Share their knowledge with others
- Understand what needs to be done to successfully complete the task
- Receive constructive feedback
- Have opportunities to work in depth
- Are given opportunities to act upon feedback

Assessment

Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the girls' learning and development process. Teachers use a range of methods to assess pupil progress, including informal observations, work scrutiny, retrieval practice, pupil-teacher conferences, discussions, quizzes, end of unit reviews.

Summative assessment also takes place, including a termly assessment week where girls complete written tests in Maths and English created by subject leaders. Additionally, standardised tests provide data and ways in which to monitor and track progress, as well as identify any need for additional support. All girls in Reception complete the Baseline assessment upon entry to the school. At the end of their first year of school, Reception girls complete the test to track their progress.

At the end of Reception, records and evidence of each girl's learning and development are used to assess each girl in the EYFS profile.

A termly progress meeting with class teachers and members of the Senior Leadership Team is used to monitor the progress of each child.

Educational Visits

Opportunities are sought to enrich the learning experiences of all girls through a range of trips, visits, guest speakers, workshops and residential trips. All classes go on regular outings over the course of the year to complement the curriculum. Full use is made of museums, art galleries, theatres, performing arts venues and historical sites, as well as frequent opportunities for outdoor learning.

In Years 4 – 6 the curriculum is supplemented by residential trips.

The mode of working

We use a balance of class, group, paired and individual work where appropriate. Within this structure:

- Classes are of mixed ability, and various forms of challenge and support are put in place including: questioning, scaffolds, workshops and layered support

- Teaching assistants are employed to support learning in Year R, 1 and 2 and support specific learners in Years 3 and above
- Schemes of work support the teaching of all subjects throughout the School.
- Girls requiring additional support are either supported in the classroom and/or given additional support for extra reinforcement either in small groups or individually. This is all supervised by the Learning Needs Coordinator, in close co-operation with the class teacher. (See Learning Needs policy)

Homework

This is considered to be an essential element of the teaching and learning process (see homework policy) therefore:

- Girls are set regular homework
- In addition to homework, it is expected that all girls will read at home every evening, with a record kept
- Girls have and spellings to learn at home which are tested on a weekly basis
- Girls practise their times tables in class and are tested every two weeks.
- Girls who would benefit from reinforcement of a particular concept, may be asked to work on additional activities at home
- Open homework is set twice a year. The first focuses on an Art Drive, and the second is called 'Ditch Your Device', where homework is paused so that girls can engage in a variety of activities such as reading, learning a new skill, playing, and much more.

The planning process:

Continuity is ensured through:

- Schemes of work and weekly plans developed by class teachers in collaboration with curriculum co-ordinator leaders as well as the Senior Leadership Team
- Planning and work scrutiny monitored by the Head of Junior School, Academic Deputy Head, Phase Leaders and curriculum leaders
- Staff meetings and INSET used to discuss pedagogy and various aspects of the curriculum and ensure consistency of approach and standards

Curriculum co-ordinators have a variety of roles. They:

- Take the lead in policy development and monitoring schemes of work to ensure progression and continuity in all subjects throughout the school
- Support colleagues in their development of planning documentation and implementation of the scheme of work, and in assessment and record keeping activities
- Monitor progress working alongside the Head of Junior School on action needed
- Where relevant, take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of resources for their area
- Are expected to keep abreast of the latest guidance, as well as developments in research and best practice

Feedback to girls about their own progress is achieved in accordance with the Feedback Policy

Cross-Phase Continuity

This is ensured by:

- Transition meetings between teachers of successive year groups throughout the school
- Weekly phase meetings
- Regular meetings of the senior leadership team (Head, Deputy Head and Phase Leaders: EYFS & KS1; Lower KS2; Upper KS2)
- Years 6/7 transfer meeting between teachers of Year 6 and the Head of Year 7, to include Learning Needs Co-ordinators.
- Meetings held by the Head of the Senior School for Year 6 parents, in preparation for transfer.
- Senior School Open Event
- Transfer of pupil records, and summative assessment results to the Senior School.

Reporting

Reporting to parents is done through Parents Evenings and three written reports. Parents are aware that:

- Formal parent meetings are held on two occasions per year
- Parents may meet their child's teacher or the Head of Junior School informally by appointment at any other time to discuss their daughter's progress

Learning Needs

(See Learning Needs policy for further details)

SHHS Junior School has a SENco responsible for all girls including the EYFS. Her role is to support staff in identifying girls' needs and planning teaching strategies, to liaise with parents and outside agencies and to co-ordinate any extra help that may be required.

Equal Opportunities

We believe all girls in the school should have equal opportunities and equal access to the curriculum. Our curriculum encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act (a).

Other relevant policies that relate specifically to the Curriculum policy:

- Behaviour policy
- Assessment policy
- Feedback policy
- Learning Needs policy

Reviewed and updated: September 2025 (Junior School Deputy Head, Academic)

Date of next review: September 2026