



South Hampstead

High School

G D S T

Our Pastoral Approach - for school & for life

FROM YEAR 7 TO THE SIXTH FORM - AND BEYOND



Outstanding pastoral care is at the heart of everything we do, and our approach is one of the most celebrated strengths of the South Hampstead community. Our staff work hard - both proactively and reactively - to support our girls in all aspects of their adolescent journey. Kindness, risk-taking and a sense of fun are actively championed, and we host numerous initiatives to nurture everyone’s happiness, resilience and wellbeing. Our bespoke pastoral curriculum and staffing structure ensure that all pupils have the best chance of building the skills to cope with the varied challenges of life.

A Bespoke Pastoral Curriculum

CO-TUTOR SYSTEM & 1:1 SUPPORT

Form groups have two or three tutors, with each pupil allocated a lead tutor with whom she has regular, one-to-one conversations. Tutors get to know their small number of tutees very well, liaising with parents and teachers where helpful and acting as the pupil’s champion. Engaged, caring teachers support and advise, whilst Heads of Year oversee the wellbeing of every girl in their cohort.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH & ECONOMIC EDUCATION (PSHEE)

Our personal development curriculum, timetabled like other subjects and taught by specialist teachers, ensures high quality exploration of wide-ranging, age-relevant issues. We schedule more time for PSHEE than many schools: 70 minutes per week in Years 7 to 9 and 35 minutes each week in Years 10 and above. Discussion-based sessions enable pupils to discover their own capabilities, develop skills and reflect on salient matters, so they feel empowered to build a toolkit of knowledge and make informed decisions.

POSITIVE PERSPECTIVES

Our bespoke Positive Perspectives programme, based on the principles of positive psychology, is taught through PSHEE lessons in Years 7 to 9 and again in the Sixth Form. Pupils learn to reflect on how these principles can be applied usefully to their own day-to-day experiences; by exploring specific strategies and resources, they are equipped with the tools and confidence in their own ability to cope.

FORM TIME ACTIVITIES

Morning form times provide a regular space for pupils to learn and reflect, with their tutors and peers, on important topics relevant to their current and future lives; activities are typically extensions of key PSHEE themes and are often connected to whole school initiatives such as Culture, Wellness and Disability Weeks.



Year 7 to 11 pupils lock their phones in Yondr pouches for the entire school day.



“South Hampstead is a warm, friendly and supportive school, where every girl is empowered to find her voice, take risks, and run her own race. Our comprehensive pastoral structures form the very bedrock of our pupils’ academic success.” - Ms Brass, Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral)

ASSEMBLIES

Our assembly programme is varied, with the whole school coming together each week to hear from staff, pupils and occasionally other guest speakers. Assemblies often focus on various aspects of personal growth, such as self-compassion or overcoming fears. Year groups also meet once every two weeks to hear from staff or pupils on age-relevant topics, such as how to support a friend through a crisis or how to maintain wellbeing whilst revising.

SEND SUPPORT

Our Student Support & Academic Access team are active within our pastoral support structures, helping pupils to thrive in and out of lessons. Cases for individual pupils are regularly reviewed by the SENCO and the Heads of Year, making sure that the individual learning needs of pupils are considered when formulating support plans and strategies.

PEER MENTORING

Lower Sixth peer mentors visit pupils in Years 7 to 9 during fortnightly form time slots. Mentors are selected based on their attitude and aptitude for helping younger pupils to navigate potential challenges; they bring friendly, big-sister-type wisdom to our younger pupils, whether that's dealing with periods or navigating their first romantic relationships.



An indoor garden provides a calming, biophilic retreat, whatever the weather.

STUDENT WELLNESS TEAM

One of our Deputy Head Girls leads a team of Sixth Form wellness champions who organise initiatives for the whole community such as our annual Wellness Week. The Wellness Team shares different ways for pupils to cultivate their emotional and physical health through daily routines, ensuring their wellbeing is prioritised.

PARENT TALKS

Mindful of the benefits of a joined-up approach between home and school, we host regular *Keeping In Touch* evening talks for our parents, delivered by highly qualified professionals. Topics range from mental health, building resilience, dealing with parties, and the school's approach to AI. Our parents also have access to *GDST Talks*: online sessions with expert speakers who address various aspects of girls' wellbeing, with the opportunity to ask questions.

FRIENDSHIPS & INTER-YEAR LINKS

We have a host of initiatives and structures in place to help ensure that our pupils find contentment and fulfilment. From Year 7 through to the Sixth Form, we help girls to develop the requisite skills to build and navigate successful friendships and relationships. We proactively change the girls' teaching groups every year, so they get to know everyone in their cohort. Our extensive *Mehr Licht* co-curricular programme encourages girls to find their niche, be themselves, and meet friends with common interests, whilst a vibrant House system fosters a sense of camaraderie across the year groups.

TOOLED UP EDUCATION

All parents have free access to the Tooled Up platform - a digital library of evidence-based resources, from highly qualified experts, on all aspects of parenting, education and family life. The Tooled Up team are very keen to hear from parents if there are topics they would like addressed.



“South Hampstead dedicates itself to instilling girls with the self-belief to navigate the world with confidence.” - The Week Independent Schools Guide

Tailored Pastoral Support

During times of difficulty - foreseen or unforeseen - young people sometimes need a bit of extra pastoral help. South Hampstead has many professionals and systems in place to ensure that we can react quickly, as and when needed, with entirely personalised interventions, tailored to match the needs and personality of the pupil.

YEAR GROUP PASTORAL TEAMS

Whatever issues arise, our year-group pastoral teams - Heads of Year, Assistant Heads of Year and Tutors are poised and ready to help, patiently guiding girls through their own responses and making recommendations for other support. All teaching staff are regularly trained in aspects of mental health support for young people, so are well-versed in spotting emerging issues, helping girls to deploy their own strategies, and working with families to ensure a holistic approach.

COUNSELLING & COACHING

Our counsellors are important members of the pastoral team, working with individual girls as they get to grips with the myriad of issues that can arise in adolescence. Pupils can refer themselves for sessions which are confidential, giving a safe, private space to explore their thoughts and feelings - and, importantly, to develop their own ability to cope.

FULL-TIME NURSING CARE

We have a nurse in school every day, supporting the broader health and wellbeing of the community and providing individualised care on a daily basis. Our nurses liaise with other pastoral staff, ensuring that pupils' needs are well understood so that patterns in their health presentation are fully addressed.

WELFARE ASSISTANT

We have a full-time welfare assistant based in the library, at the very heart of the school. She is apprised of the pastoral support plans for individual pupils and develops relationships with girls who visit the library as a place of quiet sanctuary. The welfare assistant is integral to our positive response to our girls' needs on a day-to-day basis.



Maple the cavapoo has been a member of the school pastoral team since 2019.



“The breadth and depth of care is unparalleled. The staff are truly exceptional and recognise what the girls - and their parents - need.” - Parent

PUPIL FEEDBACK

We regularly conduct Bounce Together surveys with the girls to take the temperature of the cohort as well as identifying individuals who might benefit from further conversations. Topics range from sleep and attitudes to eating to levels of worry around examinations, with pupil feedback enabling us to tailor the messaging and activities that we put in place.

HIGHER LEVEL CARE

If someone needs higher level intervention, we create a team around the child (eg. our SENCO, Welfare Assistant, Nurse, teachers); this may also include external professionals, such as psychiatrists or therapists. Meetings are regularly convened to ensure everyone is working on the same plan, with the same understanding about a girl's individual needs.



Co-curricular and House activities help pupils to forge new friendships.

“

“South Hampstead really gets it, achieving an impressive blend of high expectation and achievement with consummate supportiveness and superb pastoral care.” - Parent





At South Hampstead, our core values act as an anchor for the whole school community.



senioradmissions@shhs.gdst.net
www.shhs.gdst.net

Senior School

3 Maresfield Gardens
 London NW3 5SS

Sports Ground

25 Lymington Road
 London NW3 1HZ