

# CURRICULUM POLICY

*The Ellen Wilkinson School for Girls exists to provide the best possible education for all the girls that come here. The school is dedicated to providing excellent learning experiences for all pupils. Every pupil matters to us. (from "The Vision")*

## Aims

Our aim is that girls leaving the school will have achieved outstanding personal and academic success together with the confidence and self awareness necessary to take their place in society. We hope to foster in each individual an enquiring mind, an independent spirit and good habits in work and leisure as well as courtesy and generosity towards others.

The curriculum is designed to achieve this vision. It combines the best traditional learning with the new technology and new initiatives. We aim to make learning exciting, relevant and enjoyable and to provide girls with the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding for their future success.

## Curriculum Statement

The Ellen Wilkinson School for Girls offers a rich, broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the personal, academic, social and physical development of each and every pupil within an ethos which ensures that each person's worth and dignity are recognised.

These are the basic principles underpinning and promoting the curriculum.

- Equality of opportunity and equal access for all pupils.
- Learning experiences which are challenging, motivating, relevant and enjoyable.
- An environment which encourages independence, initiative, adaptability and confidence.
- Differentiation in teaching and learning to meet pupils' needs and ability.
- Breadth, balance and relevance to pupils' ability and needs, and also to the needs of society.
- Opportunities for all pupils to maximise their potential and demonstrate excellence.
- The recognition of special needs of individual pupils and groups of pupils including the specially gifted.
- An awareness of, and relevance to, the requirements of the World of Work and economic well-being.
- Experience and opportunities for consideration of the values and beliefs which foster an understanding and tolerance of the world in which we live.
- The opportunity to build on the learning already acquired, and preparing pupils to further and widen education opportunities.

## **ACADEMIC ORGANISATION AND CURRICULUM**

At both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 the school follows the National Curriculum, which is compulsory. Girls cannot be disapplied from National Curriculum subjects, which include Music and Physical Education, on cultural or religious grounds. The curriculum is organised through Heads of Department and co-ordinators of cross curricular areas.

In response to pupils' needs and abilities, subjects are taught either in ability groups or as mixed ability classes.

Following the introduction of revised, condensed, programmes of study in the national curriculum from 2008 the school introduced a two-year KS3 and 3 year KS4 for the 2008 Year 7 cohort and for subsequent years. This will enable pupils to study a wider range of courses from Year 9, with a personalised curriculum offering opportunities for additional support for some girls and some flexibility at the end of Year 10 with enrichment and extension options.

### **Years 7, and 8: Key Stage 3**

All pupils follow the National Curriculum, which comprises the core subjects of English, Science and Mathematics as well as the foundation subjects of History, Geography, Modern Foreign Languages, Design and Technology, Art, Information and Communication Technology, Physical Education and Music. In Design and Technology, pupils study three subjects:- Resistant Materials, Textile Technology and Food Technology. All Key Stage 3 pupils also study Drama.

In addition all pupils follow a course in Religious Education. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) including Sex and Relationship Education, and Citizenship are delivered through the taught curriculum across different subject areas as well as through a planned programme during form time and on enrichment days.

In Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) Year 7 pupils study French and then in Year 8 can opt to take a second language, chosen from German, Spanish or Urdu. Alternatively, instead of a second modern language, pupils may choose to study Latin, Graphics or Dance in Year 8.

In Year 8 and from Year 9, pupils with Special Educational needs or with English as an Additional Language can opt for a specialist learning support.

At the end of Key Stage 3 the achievement of pupils is assessed by teacher assessment.

### **Years 9 (from 2010), 10 & 11: Key Stage 4**

All pupils follow a course comprising a compulsory core together with a balanced range of option subjects which meet the National Curriculum Key Stage 4 requirements.

The Core consists of English, English Literature, Mathematics, Science (leading to double certification), Physical Education, Information Communications Technology, and Religious Education. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education, and Citizenship continue to be taught as in KS3.

Guided option choices include: Art and Design, Business and Communication Systems, French, German, Spanish, Urdu, Geography, History, Sociology, Music, Media Studies, Resistant Materials, Food Technology, Catering, Textiles Technology, Drama, Business, Travel and Tourism, Physical Education, Health and Social Care, Graphic Products, Latin and separate Sciences. New Diploma courses are being introduced from September 2010 in Business, Administration and Finance (BAF) and Travel and Tourism (TT).

Pupils are encouraged to study at least one Foreign Language.

Work Experience is an integral part of the PSHEE programme.

Examination courses lead to GCSE, Foundation Level Tier or vocational qualifications

Support is provided for pupils who may experience learning difficulties.

### Years 12 and 13

Years 12 and Year 13 provide a varied programme of study for girls of all abilities and respond to pupils' vocational, further and higher educational aspirations.

1. Pupils remaining for one year in Year 12 have a choice of Level 2 courses: -

- OCR National Certificate in Travel and Tourism
- OCR National Certificate in Business
- Diploma in Society, Health and Development (SHD)

The course includes Work Experience. Pupils also have the opportunity to study two GCSE subjects, English and Mathematics as well as Functional Skills in English, Mathematics and ICT. Pupils with English as an additional language may opt for a specialist EAL course.

2. At Advanced Level (AS and A2) pupils choose from a wide range of subjects including: English, French, German, Spanish, Arabic, Urdu, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History, Geography, Sociology, Business, Economics, Media Studies, Art & Design, Travel and Tourism, Psychology, Health and Social Care, , Drama, General Studies, Critical Thinking, Music, Philosophy and Ethics, Geography, Government and Politics, Film Studies, Music and Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

The new Advanced level Diploma in Society, Health and Development (SHD) is being introduced from September 2010.

Examination courses lead to the General Certificate of Education (Advanced Subsidiary and/or Advanced A2). It is expected that pupils choose four Advanced subjects in Year 12.

All Year 12 and 13 pupils have access to a comprehensive PSHEE and enrichment programme which includes AS's in General Studies, Critical Thinking and extended project. Pupils are able to achieve accreditation for the separate components or as part of the new AQA Baccalaureate. In addition there is an opportunity for Year 12 pupils to follow extra curricular activities, which include Young Enterprise, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award and Work Experience.

### Special Educational Needs (SEN)

In line with the 2002 SEN Code of Practice, the school follows the four stage identification and assessment model adopted by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) - school action, school action plus and statements.

The school's SEN Policy is available on request. Our objectives are: -

- to raise levels of achievement for all pupils with special educational needs
- to match all available resources and provisions to the needs of pupils in the most efficient manner possible

- to ensure the fullest access possible to the curriculum for all pupils
- to meet the SEN requirements contained in the current Code of Practice

It is the responsibility of all teachers to teach pupils with SEN. To support them each department has a named teacher for SEN who liaises with the SEN Co-ordinator and SEN team. Pupils with SEN are taught in mainstream classes whenever possible. It is also the responsibility of the form teacher to provide individual education plans for school action SEN pupils in their form bi-annually.

### Gifted and Talented (G&T)

Gifted and talented pupils are identified through teacher nominations, analysis of data and liaison with Primary Schools. In addition each department has Gifted and Talented pupils within their subject.

It is the responsibility of each teacher to ensure that gifted and talented pupils have their specific educational needs addressed in the classroom, work is differentiated and pastoral support is in place.

The school provides extra-curricular enrichment activities for the gifted and talented cohort; these are usually also open to other girls so that the G&T provision enhances education for all. Pupils also have the opportunity to participate in activities with gifted and talented pupils from other schools in Ealing and across London.

### English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Girls with English as an Additional Language are assessed upon entry to the school and appropriate provision made.

EAL support is focused within the mainstream curriculum, particularly in the lower years. Where necessary, differentiated materials and extra staffing are made available.

EAL learners are monitored closely throughout their school life to ensure that, in the upper school and Sixth Form, their abilities can be recognised through external examinations.

A consistent approach to the teaching of EAL learners is maintained through key subject teachers in liaison with the EAL Co-ordinator.

### Careers Education and Guidance

The Guidance Co-ordinator is available to advise individual pupils before and after school, and at lunch time. Parents are welcome to make appointments. A Connexions Personal Advisor from Connexions C.F.B.T. Advice and Guidance attends Parents' Evenings. Careers Guidance is given as part of the curriculum from Year 8 onwards and meets IAG standards. This will take the form of organised modules of work during form time and other lessons. Individual interviews with a Careers Adviser will take place from year 9 onwards as necessary. All pupils are encouraged to talk to the Connexions Personal Advisors during the "Lunchtime Drop In" sessions at the Careers Library.

In Year 10 pupils experience a work related Industry Day and in Year 11 a Careers Fair. Other enrichment days also help to prepare pupils for the world of work across the Key Stages.

Sixth Form pupils continue to receive careers and higher education guidance in Years 12 and 13, either from Connexions C.F.B.T. Advice and Guidance where appropriate, or through the PSHEE and enrichment programme. There is a higher education evening for girls and

parents, and girls are encouraged to attend University and college open days and higher education fairs held locally. Speakers from University and past pupils contribute towards the programme of guidance which is led by the Head of Sixth Form and delivered through the Sixth Form tutors. A high proportion of year 13 girls obtain places on degree courses at universities and other colleges each year.

### Religious Education

The school recognises and values the fact that pupils come from a wide variety of cultures. The religious education within the school acknowledges and respects the faith of the pupils. RE is a discrete part of the curriculum in Years 7-11. In the Upper School all pupils have the opportunity to take GCSE short (or full) courses in RE. The following religions are studied: Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and Buddhism. Due emphasis is given to Christianity in accordance with The Education Reform Act. We follow the Ealing Agreed Syllabus.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship and Religious Education, after consultation with the Head. If parents were to exercise this right, pupils would be given alternative work to complete. However, at present no pupils are withdrawn.

In the 6<sup>th</sup> Form pupils may opt to study Philosophy and Ethics. Beliefs and values are also a part of the General Studies course.

**PLEASE NOTE: Parents do not have the right to withdraw their daughters from Music or Dance on religious grounds. These subjects though optional at KS4 are part of the statutory National Curriculum at KS3.**

### Health Education

The Ellen Wilkinson School for Girls adopts a whole-school approach to good health, with the aim of improving both health and education standards.

As a Healthy School we aim to help pupils to do their best and build on their achievements. We also aim to assist in the long-term improvement of the public health in line with the targets and objectives set out in Our Healthier Nation.

At Key Stage 3 pupils learn to make informed choices and to develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle, so as to cope well with their changing bodies and feelings. Topics include changes at puberty, relationships, work-life-exercise balance, alcohol, smoking, illegal drugs, healthy eating, bullying, personal safety, sexually transmitted diseases and basic first aid.

At Key Stage 4, pupils learn to develop their ability to weigh up alternative courses of action for health and well-being and to value and understand relationships with a wide range of people. Topics include: assertiveness skills, stress, depression, eating disorders, alcohol, smoking, drugs, sexual activity and contraception in the context of the importance of relationships, safety and first-aid.

Topics are delivered via the form time programme, on enrichment days, in assemblies and across a variety of subjects.

### Sex and Relationship Education

Sex and Relationship Education is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality

and sexual health. It enables young people to respect themselves and others, to mature, to build up their confidence and self-esteem and to understand the reasons for delaying sexual orientation.

Sex and Relationship Education is an important and statutory element of the school's Health Education programme. The school aims to present the facts of Sex Education in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner and to set them within a clear and moral framework. The resources used are carefully selected to reflect the maturity of the pupils which are regularly reviewed. The school endeavours to use NHS specialists where ever possible to deliver aspects of SRE.

Sex and Relationship Education is introduced in the PSHEE programme in the Year 7 unit on Personal Hygiene, Menstruation and Puberty on the Health and Safety Awareness Day and in Science. Contraception, STDs and relationships are covered in Year 9 and Year 10, as part of units covering Human Reproduction delivered on special SRE enrichment days and in Science. Further study is also experienced in KS4 and KS5 Biology with issues such as Human Reproduction, the contraceptive pill and fertility treatment being discussed. RE and English also contribute to discussions on relationships across all the Key Stages.

We have a detailed Sex and Relationships Education Policy which is available from the school.

If you wish your daughter to be withdrawn from aspects of Sex Education taught in the PSHEE programme, please write to the Headteacher.

### Homework

It is the policy of the school to set homework for all pupils. A homework timetable for Years 7 to 11 is circulated to all parents in September. The type of homework set is at the discretion of the teacher but is likely to be related to work done in class. Homework is set to foster the habits of self discipline, study and preparation. It is an integral part of the educational process.

A Pupil and Parent Handbook is issued to all girls. These should be completed daily by the pupils, and signed by the parents and form tutors each week. Parents are asked to check homework regularly and to contact the school to discuss concerns.

### Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the educational process and should improve both the quality of teaching and the quality of learning. Assessment should be positive, recognising what has been learnt and identifying what needs to be learnt next, thereby leading to more effective learning by the individual pupil. The school's Assessment Policy is available from the school.