

NEWPORT GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMY TRUST



CURRICULUM POLICY

Policy written by:

SLT

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Next review due:

By the end of Spring Term 2027

Trustee Approval:

Reviewed January 2026

I. Aims and Intent of the Curriculum

a) To be balanced, challenging, engaging and appropriate for all students.

To achieve this, the curriculum has been designed such that:

- It is differentiated to be inclusive for all students
- Scheme of work and lesson plans allow equality of opportunity for all students. This includes students with special educational needs or disabilities, students with English as an additional language and students who receive Pupil Premium funding.
- There is breadth and challenge for all students throughout the key stages, with more specialised learning in Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5.
- All curriculum areas place importance on English skills of the highest quality; both written and spoken.
- It encourages an appreciation of the pleasure to be derived from creativity whether that be artistic, musical, linguistic, scientific, technological or through sporting endeavours.

b) To develop independent students who possess a love of learning combined with strong intellectual curiosity.

To achieve this the curriculum has been designed such that:

- It highlights the importance of resilience and growth mind-sets to encourage students to achieve their full potential
- It is fully supportive of student aspirations and enables them to work towards achieving their short- and long-term goals.
- It promotes skills in analytical and critical thought, through well designed learning activities and independent tasks.
- It enables students to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire a wide range of visual, auditory and kinesthetic skills through clearly designed sequential schemes of learning.
- It exploits links and connections between curriculum areas so that students are able to apply skills and knowledge in relevant situations.
- It prepares students adequately for higher level study and the world of work.

c) To develop responsible and caring students who leave NGHS with a wide variety of skills and interests, both within and far beyond the traditional academic curriculum.

To achieve this the curriculum has been designed such that:

- There are many opportunities to promote the value of social and moral understanding, particularly through PSHE, assemblies and the House System.
- The PSHE team deliver a broad and balanced curriculum which follows three core themes: health and wellbeing, relationships, living in the wider world.
- Each student can develop their own sense of personal worth and as such develop confidence to contribute widely to the life of the school in their own choice of areas.
- Students are encouraged to recognise their sense of duty to others through activities within the community.
- There are many varied extracurricular opportunities, available to students to develop their own skillset.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements for academies to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the [Academies Act 2010](#), and the [National Curriculum programmes of study](#) which the school has chosen to follow.

A range of curriculum information is published on the school's website, including;

- key stage learning overviews
- examination board materials, including an overview of the specification followed
- option booklets

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#) and [Equality Act 2010](#), and refers to curriculum-related expectations of trustee boards set out in the Department for Education's [Academy Trust Governance Guide](#).

It complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Trustees

The trustees will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

They will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities.
- The school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum".
- Proper provision is made for students with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those in receipt of pupil premium funding.
- All courses provided for students lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs and A-levels, fully approved by the Secretary of State.
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements.
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum.
- It fulfils its role in processes to disapply pupils from all or part of the National Curriculum, where appropriate, and in any subsequent appeals.

3.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met.
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the Trustees.
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate. This is a very rare occurrence and only in the event of a significant incident or medical diagnosis. In such cases the school's decision is final on this matter.
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements.
- The Trustees are fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum.

- Proper provision is made for students with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those in receipt of pupil premium funding.
- Evaluation of the curriculum is made regularly and reported on to the Trustees, through the School Development Plan, Curriculum Plan and Self Evaluation Form.
- They keep abreast of up to date knowledge, government initiatives and national priorities in respect of the school curriculum.

4. Organisation and Implementation of the Curriculum

General

The school operates a two-week timetable, with five hourly periods in each day. Students have form time for 25 minutes each morning. Students attend a House Assembly each week.

Key Stage 3

In Key Stage 3, Years 7 and 8 follow schemes of work designed by NGHS departments. This curriculum is broad and balanced with a clear aim of preparing students to face the rigour of the new GCSE specifications. All students study three separate sciences from Year 7 as well as two modern languages. The total number of periods per week in Year 7 and Year 8 is given in the table below:

| 3 Periods | 2 Periods | 1 Period |
|---|---|--|
| English Mathematics Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics) | French* Geography* German* History* Physical Education (In Y7 students have 2 weekly hours of French and German and 3 fortnightly hours of History and Geography. This is reversed in Y8). | Art Computing Drama Design Technology Music PSHE Religious Studies |

To support students and their families, each department has produced a Learning Overview which will provide information about the content being delivered in each subject as well as ways to help students make even more progress. These learning overviews are accessible through the school's website.

Key Stage 4

GCSE courses begin in Year 9 and all students study:

- Mathematics
- English Language
- English Literature
- Biology, Chemistry and Physics (Separate Sciences)
- Religious Studies (this is a short course – half of a full GCSE)

Students then choose four additional options, which are timetabled to meet as many student preferences as possible. These choices must include at least one language, at least one humanity subject and at least one practical subject. The options can be chosen from:

| Languages | Humanities | Practical Subjects |
|------------------|----------------------|--|
| French German | Geography History | Art Computing Design Technology Music |

Curriculum Time at Key Stage 4

The following table shows the number of one-hour periods allocated per week to each group in Key Stage 4.

| Subject and Periods | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 |
|----------------------------|--------|---------|---------|
| Mathematics | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| English/English Literature | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| Physics | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Chemistry | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Biology | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Religious Studies | 1 | 1 | n/a |
| PE | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| PSHE | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Option 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Option 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Option 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Option 4 | 2 | n/a | n/a |

At the end of Year 9, students personalise their learning by focusing on three additional choices instead of four. This balances their emotional wellbeing whilst focusing on their strengths throughout their GCSE courses. Students complete ten full GCSE qualifications and one half GCSE qualification at NGHS.

Advice and guidance is provided at all times to ensure that students make the most appropriate choices. Parents are consulted and the Lower School Head Girl Team runs an options event to enable older students to counsel younger peers about the choices they have made.

Setting only occurs in Mathematics from Year 9 onwards.

Key Stage 5

The Sixth Form curriculum is designed to develop the academic and personal skills required to successfully bridge the gap between school and Higher Education or Training.

The curriculum encourages independence, through an offer that includes a wide range of opportunities, either provided directly or through liaison with outside agencies.

The curriculum is designed to offer a broad range of academic A-levels and the timetable is blocked annually to ensure we can meet the first choices of as many students in each cohort. Students generally take three A levels, although for the most academically able there is an opportunity to study four (those with high GCSE average point scores of 7.75 or more). Talented mathematicians can choose to study Further Mathematics as an additional A-level if appropriate.

The subjects on offer are:

- Art & Design
- Biology
- Business Studies
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Drama & Theatre Studies
- Economics
- English Literature
- French
- Further Mathematics
- Geography
- German
- Government & Politics
- History
- Mathematics
- Music
- Physics
- Product Design
- Psychology
- Religious Studies (Philosophy & Ethics)

We also offer AS PE as an enrichment course as well as Core Maths.

All students taking three A-levels (and not AS PE/Core Maths) also embark on an Extended Project which is a half A level graded up to A*. This extended project is optional for students who take four A levels. This qualification allows themselves to immerse themselves in a topic of their choice and provides many key skills that prepare them for Higher Education. Furthermore, the value placed in this by an increasing number of universities is recognised in the form of lowered entry offers.

The Wider Curriculum

PSHE Curriculum

In KS3, the focus is on helping students to develop self-awareness, positive self-esteem and confidence to be able to stay as healthy as possible, keep themselves and others safe, have worthwhile and fulfilling relationships, respect the differences between people and develop independence and responsibility. There is a detailed map in development showing full coverage and how the different modules link together.

In KS4 students have a continued focus on the areas mentioned above as well as some additional work focussed on democracy, British Values and citizenship.

Outside of lessons, students have the opportunity to observe workshops that are run by external visitors. These include our local police liaison team and Loudmouth Education. Loudmouth support our relationship and sex education curriculum through the delivery of workshops and theatre performances which also help to raise awareness of important issues that students face in society today.

Careers Education

Our careers education programme is outstanding. It starts with establishing a strong awareness of personal skills and preferences in order to inform decisions regarding options for GCSEs and later on in the school, A level choices.

Students are encouraged to start thinking about their career options early in their time here through both elements of PSHE and curriculum subject areas.

All Year 10 pupils do work experience during Curriculum Enrichment Week and Sixth Formers are encouraged to undertake volunteering opportunities or work shadowing, such as the NHS Young Volunteer Programme which is an excellent hands-on experience within the NHS for six months. Year 12 also complete a 4 day work experience placement in May.

Employability skills can be just as important as exam results and the wide range of House events, clubs, societies and trips available help them to develop these. By combining these with a broad educational base, practical experience and access to the best information and advice (including visits by outside organisations), we can ensure they are equipped to make informed decisions about their options.

Further Curriculum Opportunities – House System

Newport Girls' High School operates a House system, with students organised into one of three houses on entrance to the school in Year 7. The main aims of the house system are to:

- Provide all students with a sense of belonging within the school community.
- Give all students the opportunity to partake in fun and exciting activities and competitions outside of the classroom.
- Provide leadership opportunities for students.
- Encourage students to take both individual and collective responsibility for the success of their house.
- Celebrate success through the curriculum with the use of House Points to reward students.

Throughout the year, students are able to compete in various house competitions. There is at least one house competition every half term and all students must compete in at least one of these competitions. This academic year we have the following house competitions; Bake Off, Noticeboard, Quiz, Music, Dance, Art/Photographic, Board Games and Drama. Every student must also compete in various House Sports Competitions within PE and Games lessons and also in Sports Day in the Summer.

Each House also competes for the House Point Cup at the end of each term and most importantly at the end of each academic year. Students can contribute to their House's success by earning House Points within lessons for their effort and achievement. Additionally, they can earn House Points outside of lessons by contributing to the wider life of the school at school events or school run clubs and showing their commitment to the school in general.

5. Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- Students from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Students with SEND
- Students with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEND policy and information report.

6. Monitoring and Impact

- Curriculum decisions are proposed by the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team and these are brought to the Trustees Curriculum Committee for ratification.
- Curriculum objectives are set and reviewed as part of the school development plan and self-evaluation process.
- Use of SMID by Senior Leaders to monitor progress of all students across the curriculum.
- External examination results are fully analysed annually with an action plan developed as appropriate. The full evaluation is shared with Trustees to ensure that they are fully aware of strengths and areas for development.
- Student voice is given a high priority through the use of School Council, the options process or additional surveys to gauge feedback on their experiences.
- Student and parent surveys are undertaken to provide an opportunity for points regarding the curriculum to be raised.

Faculty Leaders have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are deployed, stored and managed. They also undertake Quality Assurance cycles each half term and monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school by:

- Scheduled termly work scrutinies
- Lesson observations
- Student voice
- Formal appraisal observations, overseeing a number of staff within their own faculty
- Use of SMID to interrogate and analyse current in school data to identify actions and intervention required.

7. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Assessment Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- SEND policy and information report
- Equality information and objectives
- Careers Policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the SLT member responsible for the curriculum. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full board of Trustees.