

## CURRICULUM POLICY

### JUNIOR SCHOOL

**1. Introduction.** The curriculum policy of the three constituent parts of the Foundation is as stated in the current prospectus. Our vision is that our pupils should grow up to be independent learners who are able to explore their thinking within a curriculum which is relevant, engaging and scholarly. In the Junior School, pupils study the full range of National Curriculum subjects, including French, from Year 3, although there is a necessary focus on the core skills of literacy and numeracy. While we want pupils to know things, we also encourage them to weigh the evidence, reflect on their outcomes and apply their learning through problem-solving activities. We take account of the ability of every pupil and ensure that each is challenged and her or his talents fostered. When pupils leave Highgate Junior School, we want them to be knowledgeable and well-adjusted young people who have the thinking skills, study skills and intellectual curiosity to sustain them in their secondary education.

**2. Meeting the Regulatory Requirements for the Quality of Education Provided (Curriculum) [ISI Regulatory Requirements Part I (2.1)].** Full details are available in Schemes of Work: from yy3 upwards: these take the form of departmental schemes produced by the Subject Coordinator and kept in the X drive on the central database.

a) Relevant Subject Coordinators or Heads of Year, in liaison with the Director of Studies, ensure that the content of the courses is suitable for each year group. The National Curriculum is shadowed in all subjects, although in Mathematics, pupils are set work which is one year ahead of their school year. Heed is taken of aspects of gender, race and religion when formulating and choosing schemes of work, and lesson plans make provision for differentiation in accordance with the aptitudes of pupils. Currently no pupil in the school has a statement.

b) Pupils are assessed in literacy and numeracy by appropriate work set in each year and by formal examinations and tests. These tests include PIPS, which are sat by all pupils in the school, as well as end-of-year examinations and interim assessments. Pupil participation in class at every level ensures that high standards of speaking and listening are maintained, the latter also tested by written work and formal tests.

c) Lessons are conducted in English; where English is not the pupils' first language, we are satisfied at the point of entry that the pupil is able to cope with the teaching provided. When the pupil simply needs help in bettering his/her fluency and understanding, special arrangements are made through the Learning Support Teacher.

d) We are not currently dealing with pupils with a statement. Such needs are coordinated by the Director of Learning Support for the Senior School, in liaison with the Learning Support Coordinator for the Junior School, who together ensure that statutory requirements and individual needs are met.

**[ISI Regulatory Requirements Part I (2.2) (b), (e), (i)]**

e) The Christian ethos of the school sets the standards for personal and social education. Such issues are dealt with specifically in assemblies and also in Religious Education classes, which are taught as part of the Humanities programme. Whole-school assemblies happen twice weekly, and are conducted by the School Chaplain and/or members of the Senior Management Team. There are also year group Assemblies within the week, which are conducted by members of Senior Management, Form Tutors and sometimes the pupils themselves. Many moral and social issues are also raised and discussed in other subjects. The main forum for these issues is PSHE; but issues of friendship, neighbourliness and citizenship inevitably tend to occur, and are addressed, on a daily basis, often through form time. Health education matters are dealt with by tutors through PSHE, and, more informally, by the School Nurse, aided by experts in particular areas from both inside and outside the school.

f) Full schemes of work are in place for pupils under 5 (see Pre-prep documentation) and a full A Level programme is available for pupils between the ages of 16 to 18. **[ISI Regulatory requirements Part I (2.1)]**

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g) The academic programme is open to all pupils. We aim to create a safe environment where all are stimulated to learn and to pursue both a full general programme of education and their own specific interests. The core primary curriculum is the same for every child, although there is both extension opportunity and learning support for those requiring it. As a selective school, it is our expectation that pupils will meet a basic academic standard which allows them to access the curriculum: regular monitoring of pupils serves to check their academic progress (See separate policy document on Assessment and Reporting).

### 3. The structure of the School and its Curriculum

**3.1 The structure of the school** and its three sections is set out below. Regular meetings between the Heads of the three schools, between the Directors of Studies and between Heads of Department and other teachers enable curriculum coherence and provide for a focus for curriculum change and development.

Age	NC year	Key Stage			
3-4	Nursery	Foundation	Pre-Preparatory School		
4-5	Reception				
5-6	1	KS 1			
6-7	2				
7-8	3	KS 2		Junior School	
8-9	4				
9-10	5				
10-11	6				
11-12	7	KS 3			Senior School
12-13	8				
13-14	9				
14-15	10	KS 4			
15-16	11				
16-17	12	KS 5			
17-18	13				

#### 3.2 The Nursery

#### 3.3. Reception: Years 1 and 2

#### 3.4 Junior School

The curriculum in Years 3 – 6 closely shadows the National Curriculum. As such, pupils study the statutory subjects of Art, Design and Technology, English, Information and Communication Technology, Mathematics, Music, Physical Education and Science. Geography, History and Religious Education are taught within Humanities on a rolling programme, whereby Geography and History alternate, half-termly, and Religious Education is taught alongside each. French is also taught from Year 3.

The flexibility of the Junior School curriculum allows for many cross-curricular links. Planning happens within year groups, which allows for a horizontal, thematic approach to be taken, as well as a vertical, skills- and knowledge-based approach. Thus, it is not uncommon for the teaching of English and ICT, for example, to reinforce the teaching of Humanities. In Year 3 and 4, a majority of lessons are taught by Form Tutors, enabling cross-curricular links to happen naturally out of the time spent with children. In Year 5 and 6, this is still the case, to a degree, but increasingly, in the upper years, the core subjects of English, Maths and Science are taught by subject specialists, rather than Form Tutors.

The figures below refer to the numbers of 50-minute lessons allocated per subject per week:

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Subject	Period Allocation			
	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
English	6	6	5	4.5
Mathematics	5	5	5	4.5
Science	3	3	3	3
French	1	1	1	2
Humanities	4	4	4	4
Art	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Design Technology	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Music	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Physical Education	1.5	1.5	1	1.5
Games	1.5	1.5	3.5	3.5
Information Technology	1	1	1	1
Drama	1	1	1	1
PSHE	1	1	1	1

### 3.5 Senior School: Years 7, 8 and 9 (ISI Regulatory Requirements Part I (2.2) (a), (b), (c), (i), (j))

The curriculum in Years 7, 8 and 9 is designed to give pupils further experience of a wide range of subjects, not only to provide knowledge and to develop critical thinking skills but also to ensure that they can make informed choices about which subjects to continue to GCSE.

All pupils in each of the years study English, Mathematics, Design Technology, French, Geography, History, Art, Music, Drama, Information Technology and Religious Education. In Y7, Coordinated Science is taught (one teacher covering all three sciences and concentrating on establishing scientific method), while Biology, Physics and Chemistry are taught separately in Years 8 and 9.

Pupils are taught Latin in Years 7 and 8. Unless they join the school in Year 9 with no Latin, or it is clear that they have reached their ceiling in this subject, they also take Latin in Year 9; otherwise they may take Classical Civilisation in Year 9. Pupils who show aptitude for Latin also study Greek in the same single timetable slot in Year 9.

In Year 9, pupils must opt for either a second modern foreign language (Spanish, German, Russian, or Mandarin). In Year 8, Mandarin is studied, the time currently being taken from other subjects on a rolling basis, giving a maximum of thirty sessions.

Each year group has a double period of Games each week.

Year 9 has one period per week called Linguistics taught by the Head Master for half of the academic year (the current focus is in fact on study skills); the class has its Drama lessons for the other half.

While pupils study Information Technology in Years 7-9, no formal qualification has been deemed suitable and currently none is taken.

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In addition to tutorial time before school and in the long morning break, each class has a fortnightly tutorial period in the timetable for PHSE and academic monitoring. (ISI Regulatory Requirements Part I (2.2) (f))

The figures below refer to the numbers of 50-minute lessons allocated in a fortnightly cycle (in Year 9, Art and DT are taught on a carousel, one at a time for half the year on 4ppf).

	Period Allocation			Subject	Period Allocation		
	Y7	Y8	Y9		Y7	Y8	Y9
English	8	7	6	Design Technology	3	3	2
Mathematics	7	7	7	Art	3	3	2
General Science	8			Music	2	2	2
Biology		3	4	Drama	2	2	1
Chemistry		3	4	Information Technology	2	2	1
Physics		3	4	Latin/ Latin & Greek/ Classical Civilisation	4	4	4
French	4	4	4	Spanish/German/ Russian/Mandarin			4
History	3	3	3	Physical Education	4	4	2
Geography	3	3	3	Games	4	4	4
Religious Education	2	2	1	Tutorial	1	1	1
				Linguistics			1

### 3.3 Senior School: Years 10 and 11 (to GCSE) (ISI Regulatory Requirements Part I (2.2) (a), (b), (c), (i), (j))

The GCSE curriculum core consists of:

- English Language (IGCSE)
- English Literature (IGCSE)
- Mathematics (GCSE linked pair from 2012)
- A modern foreign language (IGCSE, except in Russian)
- Science (IGCSE from 2012). Pupils take the same course in Year 10. Depending on their performance and aptitude, they are re-setted for y11; the six top sets take three separate sciences to gain three IGCSEs in Physics, Chemistry and Biology, while the two lower sets take the Double Award.

In addition, pupils take three other subjects. While guidance is given over the formation of a sensible set of subjects and university/career implications are discussed (ISI Regulatory Requirements Part I (2.2) (g)), there is no other compulsion on pupils as regards these further choices. In other words, they may choose any three from History, Geography, Religious Studies, Art, Music, Design Technology, Latin, Greek, Classical Civilisation (pupils may start this subject *ab initio* in Year 10); in addition to the modern language taken as a core subject, pupils may take a second modern language, the languages on offer being French, German, Spanish, Russian and Mandarin. Pupils make their choices and the blocking system is drawn up to accommodate the first choices of as many pupils as possible (in most years, only one or two out of c150 do not get their first choice set of subjects).

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In addition all pupils have Religious Education, whether or not they are taking Religious Studies GCSE. All pupils have a Games afternoon weekly; Year 10 pupils have Physical Education fortnightly. All pupils, in addition to the tutorial time before school and in the long morning break, have a fortnightly tutorial within the timetable for PSHE, careers education and academic monitoring. In Year 10 only there is additionally a fortnightly period of PSHE to cover central issues at this crucial stage. (ISI Regulatory Requirements Part I (2.2) (f))

The allocation of subjects is indicated in the table below (figures are the number of periods of 50 minutes in a fortnightly cycle, non-GCSE time in italics).

Subject	Period Allocation		Subject	Period Allocation	
	Year 10	Year 11		Year 10	Year 11
English	8	8	Design Technology	6	6
Mathematics	7	7	Latin	6	6
Physics	4	5	Classical Civilisation	6	6
Chemistry	4	5	Greek	6	6
Biology	4	5	Spanish	6	6
French	6	6	German	6	6
History	6	6	Russian	6	6
Geography	6	6	Mandarin	6	6
Religious Studies	6	6	<i>PSHE</i>	1	
Art	6	6	<i>Religious Education</i>	1	1
Music	6	6	<i>Physical Education</i>	2	
			<i>Games</i>	4	4
			<i>Tutorial</i>	1	1

### 3.4. Senior School: Years 12 and 13 (ISI Regulatory Requirements Part I (2.2) (a), (b), (c), (h), (i), (j))

Pupils in the Sixth Form take four AS subjects in Year 12; about 20% take four to A2, the rest reducing to three A2 subjects. All pupils who can do so reasonably are encouraged to take four subjects. The choice is made from four option blocks; often the blocking can be altered to accommodate pupils whose first choice is not available on the basic blocking structure.

We deliberately do not offer five AS subjects; we believe that time should be spent thinking about subjects and reading from prescribed lists and beyond the syllabus. At this level, it is our policy to encourage depth and academic rigour. It is recognised that some pupils can achieve this at the same time as doing five subjects. Some measures are in place to provide off-timetable classes (eg in Chemistry, French and Latin in recent years) when two or three very able pupils are keen to do a fifth subject: one or two lessons are arranged per week to impart the basic material and the pupils follow up the reading and learning on their own, doing all the written work expected of a full AL pupil. In addition, able scientists occasionally take Maths, Further Maths and Physics, three subjects on two blocks (Maths releasing certain agreed periods to allow pupils to attend half the AL Physics lessons where new work is being introduced).

The qualification to take a subject to AS is an A grade at GCSE: this is set as the target. We do make exceptions, except in Mathematics where it is evident that a pupil gaining less than

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A is very likely to get no more than a C at AL. An A grade in specified related subjects is required for subjects not taken at GCSE Level (eg an A in Maths for AL Economics).

The subjects currently on offer (24) in the Sixth Form are:

- English Literature
- History; Government and Politics
- Latin; Greek; Classical Civilisation
- French; Spanish; German; Russian
- Economics; Geography; Philosophy; Religious Studies
- Art; History of Art; Music; Theatre Studies; Design Technology
- Mathematics; Further Mathematics
- Physics, Chemistry; Biology

In Year 12, eleven periods are normally taught of the twelve available on the block. Some subjects (eg History of Art choose to use all twelve because of the volume of material on the syllabus). All departments utilise the twelve periods at A2 in Year 13, except if the set (eg in Greek) is small and made up of very able pupils (when the lessons may be reduced to nine or ten).

In addition, Sixth Formers have:

- One tutorial per fortnight in the timetable, in addition to tutorial time at the start of the day and in the long morning break, for academic monitoring, careers and higher education advice and for PHSE matters (ISI Regulatory Requirements Part I (2.2) (f), (g), (j))
- Two Games periods (ie one afternoon) per week
- In Year 13, Cultural Studies lesson per fortnight; the Head of English is also the Director of Cultural Learning and is responsible, with the Director of Studies, for drawing up a coherent programme based loosely on the theme of *The Modern World*. This unashamedly looks at cultural themes, ensuring, whenever possible, that an awareness of the cultural heritage of the city in which they live is fostered in pupils. (ISI Regulatory Requirements Part I (2.2) (a), (b), (f), (h), (j))
- Pupils in Year 12 follow a weekly Critical Method course (ie critical thinking) devised by us to meet the specific needs of pupils. This does not currently lead to the somewhat narrow AS examination in Critical Thinking, but we are seeking an internal method of validating the course, whether by test or by continuous assessment. In the Lent Term of Year 12, pupils are offered the opportunity to take the Extended Project Qualification.

A Sixth Former therefore has, in Year 12 a total of 51 out of sixty contact periods per fortnight (44 AL lessons, 4 Games, one Tutorial, and two Critical Thinking); a pupil keeping four A2 subjects will have 54 contact periods, while the majority studying three subjects will have 42 contact periods.

### 3.8 The Wider Curriculum in the Junior School

- a) Sport and Games.** Physical Education is taught in all year groups, as is Games. A rich variety of sports are on offer; those naturally interested in sport are encouraged and fostered to develop their talents to a high level. On the other hand, it is recognised that not all are natural sportsmen/women and some pupils have an aversion to sport. We are committed to encouraging physical fitness and provide a full range of activities, so that each

pupil at every level can find something to his/her liking and so develop physical fitness and the ability to be part of a team and to work together. Competition is encouraged and excellence in team and individual sports, as in other areas of school life, is nurtured and very much valued. Physical fitness, and the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, are reinforced through the PSHE programme. **[ISI Regulatory requirements Part I (2.2) (f)]**

- b) Information Technology.** All pupils in all year groups have formal lessons in Information Technology. It is our belief that ICT is an essential tool, not only in and of itself, but also to support pupils' learning in all subjects. The Subject Coordinator for Information Technology reviews the use of and provision for ICT in the various subjects to ensure not only that pupils are using and developing their skills to an appropriate level, but also that full advantage is made of the school's ICT provision to support teaching. Each subject's Scheme of Work should take into account the use of ICT within that subject and should indicate where specific skills are being required and practised in particular tasks. Many subject resources exist only as SMART Notebook activities, and teachers are accustomed to using web-based learning tools to support their teaching. **[ISI Regulatory Requirements Part I (2.2) (a), (b), (c), (h), (j)]**
- c) Religious Education.** All pupils, within all year groups, have Religious Education classes within the Humanities programme. Highgate has a Christian heritage, while welcoming those of all faiths or none, and the ethos of the school relies heavily on Christian ethics (see separate document on *Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development*). Religious education serves to open all pupils' eyes to the spiritual dimension in their own and others' lives. It matters to us that our pupils are equipped to live a moral life informed by choices and values and are helped to navigate their way through uncertain and unchanging times. Pupils learn about and discuss moral and ethical issues and study comparative religion, making them aware of the beliefs of others by whom they are surrounded in North London. In addition, schemes of work in almost all subjects inevitably touch upon issues of a religious, moral or ethical nature. **[ISI Regulatory Requirements Part I (2.2) (f), (j)]**
- d) Personal and Social Education.** All three parts of the Foundation follow carefully structured programmes of personal and social education. The specific topics are delivered by a variety of means: formal lessons, tutorial periods, assemblies etc. A separate PHSE document spells out the content; in the Junior School, this area is the responsibility of the Assistant Head (Pastoral). **[ISI Regulatory Requirements Part I (2.2) (f)]**
- e) Extra-curricular activities.** A wide range of extra-curricular activities is on offer and is listed in a separate document. All pupils choose one or more activity to pursue at the end of the school day. Some activities have an academic base, some are more practical and artistic. The specific provision of the aforementioned activities is tailored to the age of the pupils concerned, and care is taken to ensure that there are activities to suit both boys and girls. There are school plays within year groups, and we also encourage pupils to take up a musical instrument and to take part in the many orchestras, choirs and music groups. **[ISI Regulatory requirements Part I (2.2) (a), (b), (c), (f), (h), (i) (j)]**

**3.9 Complementary documentation.** Separate documents exist on the following related matters:

- Homework **[ISI Regulatory Requirements Part I (3) (a)]**
- Reporting and assessment **[ISI Regulatory Requirements Part I (3) (b) (g) (4)]**
- Learning support **[ISI Regulatory Requirements Part I (2.2) (b) (e) (i)]**

*MJ Stewart, JS Director of Studies, September 2011*