

TORMEAD

CURRICULUM POLICY

This whole school policy also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage

This policy should be read in conjunction with

- **SEND policy**
- **Remote Working Policy**
- **Academic Performance & Enrichment Policy**
- **Careers Policy**
- **RSE Policy**

The curriculum aims to:

- Prepare girls for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society
- Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, intellectual and physical development of girls
- Provide opportunities for all girls to learn and make significant progress reflective of individual ability

In order to achieve these aims, the curriculum should have:

Breadth - to provide a range, variety and scope of skills and understanding

Balance - to afford each element of the curriculum sufficient time and emphasis to play its part in achieving the above aims

Progression - to allow for increasing challenge and achievement over time

Continuity - to ensure that girls' experiences build on what has gone and prepare them for what is to come

Access - to ensure that all girls have access to relevant components of the curriculum

Differentiation - to ensure that the curriculum contents and methods of the curriculum meet the needs of individual girls

Appropriate schemes of work are updated regularly and implemented School-wide. During the COVID-19 pandemic, adjustments have been made to schemes of work to prioritise the most important components for progression, taking into account teachers' assessments of learning and progress.

School Curriculum Plan

Reception

The teaching programme ensures that the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Curriculum are fulfilled. It endeavours to give all children the best possible start in life and support them in fulfilling their potential. The curriculum aims to ensure that all children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It provides them with a foundation for their school career and gives them a broad range of knowledge and skills that enable progress through school and life. There are seven areas of learning and development. The prime areas of learning develop the children's curiosity, enthusiasm and capacity for learning and forming relationships. These are Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development. These are then supported by four specific areas: Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.

Key Stage One and Key Stage Two

The teaching programme acknowledges and broadly follows the principles and guidelines of the National Curriculum as a basis for planning, but goes beyond and outside of it in order to provide the most challenging, interesting and relevant curriculum for our pupils. The teaching programme ensures that the girls are given experience in the following areas:

Linguistic: To develop their skills in communication, command of language through listening, speaking, reading and writing; this aspect will be evident in all the subject areas listed below. There are also specific lessons in written and spoken English.

Mathematical: To develop their ability to make calculations, to understand and appreciate relationships and patterns in number and space and to develop their capacity to think logically and express themselves clearly. This is achieved in a variety of ways including practical activity, exploration and discussion.

Scientific: To increase their knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces along with developing the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry.

Technological: To include the use of information technology (IT); developing, planning and communicating ideas; working with tools, equipment, materials and components to produce good quality products and evaluating processes and products.

Human and Social: To increase their knowledge and understanding of people, their environments and how human action now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions.

Physical: To develop their physical control and co-ordination, their tactical skills and imaginative responses and an ability to evaluate and improve their performances. Girls also gain a knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of fitness and health.

Aesthetic and Creative: To develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of the processes of making, composing and inventing.

The following subjects are covered at Key Stage One and Key Stage Two:

- English: drama and library skills, spelling and handwriting lessons
- Mathematics: including 'Maths speaking and listening' lessons which focus on maths vocabulary, problem solving and the application of maths. From Year 1 (Summer Term), the 'Times Tables Challenge' focuses initially on learning the times tables before moving on to improving knowledge and understanding of the manipulation of number and number facts
- Science
- Information Technology (IT)
- Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)
- Humanities (History and Geography)
- Art
- Design Technology
- Music
- PE which includes gymnastics and swimming (swimming from Spring Term for Reception)
- French (from Year 3), Spanish (from Year 5) and Latin (from Year 5)
- Religious Education
- Thinking and Learning

Staff are encouraged to enrich the syllabus where they feel it is in the best interests of the girls. The curriculum is balanced and access to the whole curriculum is for all.

Senior School

Throughout the Senior School curriculum, girls are given broad experience of linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative elements of education which enables them to acquire and develop their speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills.

Lower School – Years 7 to 9 (Key Stage Three)

During Years 7 to 9 girls study:

- English
- Mathematics
- Biology, Chemistry and Physics (as separate subjects)
- Design & Technology
- Food & Nutrition
- Modern Foreign Languages (French, German and Spanish in Year 7; girls opt for 2 of these to continue in Years 8-9)
- Classics (Latin, with elements of Greek and Classical Civilisation introduced in Year 9)
- Humanities (History, Geography and Religious Education)
- Arts education (Art, Drama and Music)
- Physical Education, IT and PSHE with Citizenship
- Year 7 girls study the School's in-house Cogito carousel; Year 7 and 8 girls follow the School's in-house Floreo programme.

Upper School — Years 10 and 11 (Key Stage Four)

Courses of study for public examinations at this level are for either GCSE or IGCSE qualifications, determined by the head of the relevant academic department. These are collectively referred to as GCSEs.

Girls study ten subjects for GCSE, including a compulsory core of:

- English Language and English Literature
- Mathematics
- A Modern Foreign Language (French, German or Spanish)
- Science: girls sitting GCSEs in 2022 and 2023 choose a minimum of two single sciences from Biology, Chemistry and Physics. There is no Double Science option for these year groups. Girls sitting GCSEs in 2021 are studying either Triple or Double Award Science (in Triple Award Science girls gain three GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry, Physics; in Double Award Science girls gain two GCSEs in a combination of the same three science).

To take into account individual aptitudes and preferences, girls also have a free choice of options, subject to demand and timetabling restraints, from:

- Art
- Classical Civilisation
- Computer Science
- Design & Technology – Resistant Materials
- Drama
- Food & Nutrition (from September 2021)
- French
- Geography
- German
- Classical Greek
- History
- Latin
- Music
- Physical Education
- Religious Studies
- Spanish

We recommend that girls follow a broad and balanced curriculum until the end of Year 11, so that no career paths are closed off and every girl has the opportunity to gain the best possible examination results.

In previous years, some girls have studied for 9 GCSEs. From 2020 onwards, all girls will be expected to pursue 10 GCSEs. Girls' progress is continually monitored, and an intervention may be suggested if it is clear that academic load is causing significant negative impact to a particular girl.

In addition to examination subjects, all girls have classes in:

- Physical Education
- Religious Education
- PSHE with Citizenship

In Year 11, girls also have classes in:

- Careers and Professional Development Guidance

Every girl is strongly encouraged to undertake work experience after the GCSE examinations.

Sixth Form – Lower 6th and Upper 6th (Key Stage Five)

A L6 girl may choose between the following routes:

- Four A Level subjects, one of which she will most probably drop at the end of L6, taking an AS Level in that subject only if she chooses to sit the exam and it is available. Girls will also undertake "Symposium", an in-house extended project.
- Three A Level subjects (all of which will be studied for the entire two years) plus the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), which leads to an additional external qualification.
- Three A Level subjects plus Symposium.

The AS option is not available in all subjects at the discretion of the Head of Department, with some subjects taking a linear approach to teaching A level. Girls are fully informed before making their subject choices.

Girls have a completely free choice from the following courses of study, subject to demand and timetabling considerations:

- Art
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Classical Civilisation
- Computer Science
- Design & Technology – Product Design
- Economics
- English Literature
- French
- Geography
- German
- Classical Greek
- Government & Politics
- History
- Latin
- Mathematics
- Further Mathematics
- Music
- Physical Education
- Physics
- Psychology
- Religious Studies
- Spanish
- Theatre Studies

The timetable is built around the choices made by the Sixth Form. Wherever possible each subject is taught by two members of staff, giving different perspectives on the subject.

In addition to examination subjects, all girls have a weekly sports afternoon with a wide range of options available both on and off site. All girls take part in the Horizons and Sixth Sense programmes which cover a variety of life skills; careers and professional development guidance; and PSHE with Citizenship topics.

Teaching and Learning

Philosophy

Tormead is an accredited High Performance Learning (HPL) World Class School. HPL empowers all learners to develop their potential to perform at their highest level. It consists of a set of 20 Advanced Cognitive Performance Characteristics (ACPs) and 10 Values, Attitudes and Attributes (VAAs) that, when followed, will enable each girl to become a successful learner. Please see appendices for ACP and VAA lists.

Teaching styles are supportive, enthusiastic and rigorous, underpinned by excellent subject knowledge at a higher level. Girls are encouraged to ask questions and to seek help if needed.

Heads of Department oversee the adoption of teaching methods and approaches which are innovative and appropriate to subject demand and the needs of pupils.

A range of learning styles are taken into account when planning and teaching. Lesson planning recognises that learning occurs through active intellectual engagement on the part of the learner, that it involves feelings, that it should always be in context and must link new knowledge with previous understanding.

Both teachers and girls have high expectations and achieve high academic standards. In the Junior School, surgeries are offered to Year 6 girls in Maths. All Senior School departments run surgeries, where girls may seek help with difficulties, strengthen their learning dialogue or try more advanced work. During the COVID-19 restrictions subject support continues in a socially-distanced format. A system of academic mentors is also in place, where teachers help the girls with their studies. Study skills are taught in all sections of the School. As girls progress through the School they are supported as they make appropriate curriculum choices and encouraged to take greater responsibility for their own learning and time management.

Compulsory Independent Study periods allow girls to work independently, in a quiet room under the supervision of a teacher. Girls in Years 5 and 6 are allocated two periods of Independent Study per week. The Senior School timetable includes a daily supervised half hour Independent Study session for girls in Years 7 to 11. Hour-long independent study sessions are built into the fortnightly timetable as follows.

- Year 7 – 3 periods
- Year 8 – 2 periods
- Year 9 – 3 periods
- Year 10 – 6 periods
- Year 11 – 5 periods

Those currently taking 9 GCSEs in Years 10 and 11 will have 4 more IS sessions per fortnight. Those girls in Y11 currently studying Double Science only have 4 IS sessions.

Girls in the Sixth Form are expected to manage their own workload, taking advantage of free periods and the areas of the school that are devoted to their quiet study.

Homework

Homework is an integral part of the curriculum. It helps girls acquire the skills needed for self-organisation, encourages independent learning, consolidates understanding and helps to foster a sense of responsibility. It also gives parents the opportunity to be involved in their daughter's learning and promotes the home-school partnership. Differentiated homework is set where appropriate, so that all girls can find the appropriate level of challenge and support in independent tasks.

At Tormead we also recognise the importance of fostering intellectual curiosity. In the Senior School, one week in every half term is designated as a 'Big Picture Week' in which no homework is set and girls are encouraged to pursue their own academic interests. This is followed up in one to one sessions with tutors during the following week. The Junior School completes an HPL project each half term based on a 'what if?' question.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The School is committed to recognising and addressing the needs of girls with SEND, whether of a permanent or temporary nature, and provides for these in different ways. These include individual support lessons, differentiation within whole-class lessons and extra time or other allowances in examinations, where need has been identified and evidenced in line with exam

board regulations. The SEND register is updated and consulted regularly so that teachers can identify each girl's needs as described in her education, health and care (EHC) plan and/ or individual education plan (IEP). Please see SEND Policy for more details.

More Able Girls

While recognising that all girls at Tornead are of above-average ability relative to national standards, the School is committed to identifying those who display advanced HPL characteristics. Staff provide for these girls not only through differentiated classroom teaching but also through departments and enrichment activities such as the Beacon Programme.

Other Particular Needs

The school is committed to ensuring that girls with particular needs, other than those stated above (e.g. looked after children, young carers or those with specific health concerns) will receive the support they need to achieve educationally.

PSHE

There is a clear expectation that staff must do everything they can to prevent a culture developing that is hostile to the protected characteristics which are¹:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

All girls receive PSHE with Citizenship education which reflects the school's aims and ethos as well as the Fundamental British Values:

- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty
- mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith

This programme promotes our clear expectation of respect and a culture of tolerance and diversity with particular regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. It prepares the girls for the opportunities, responsibilities and experience of life in British Society. These ideas and values are also embedded throughout the curriculum and non-curriculum areas within the school.

Relationships and Sex Education

Relationships and sex education is carried out principally within PSHE lessons, and is dealt

with across year groups according to the needs and maturity of girls at different ages. ²Please refer to the RSE policy for more details.

Careers

Tormead follows a structured programme of Careers and Professional Development Education throughout the Senior School with discrete lessons in Years 8, 11 and the Sixth Form (via the Sixth Sense programme). Individual and timely advice is offered to all pupils in Year 9, Year 11 and the Upper Sixth. Girls are encouraged to fulfil their potential and consider a broad range of career options. Key skills such as decision-making and self-evaluation are encouraged to ensure that the girls are fully equipped to make appropriate choices regarding their futures. Appropriate, informed and impartial advice is offered by the Head of Careers and Professional Development, supported by a range of resources (both physical and virtual) which are impartial, age appropriate, inspiring, credible, accurate and up to date.³

Character Education

Girls are encouraged to build proficiency in the 10 VAAs not only in their academic pursuits but also by participating in the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities on offer at Tormead. The Assistant Head: Adventure & Service oversees a programme of volunteering opportunities for Sixth Form girls, both locally and abroad, as well as a variety of charitable efforts and community-based enterprises which are open to girls throughout the school. These are supported by the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, optional from Year 10 onwards, and through House activities. In this way, we prepare the girls to engage more broadly with society.

Date of Last Review: 10 November 2020

By Resolution of the Governing Body:

MRS R HARRIS
Chair of Governors

MR D BOYD
Head

1st December 2020

Appendices:

Appendix 1. HPL – Values, attitudes and attributes

