



Years 7-13

Our Curriculum Principles

2025-2026

NHSG Curriculum Principles

1. Purpose of the Curriculum Principles

This document sets out our school's key principles and framework which is used to guide the design, delivery, and evaluation of our curriculum at Nonsuch High School for Girls. It should be used in conjunction with;

- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy
- NHSG PSHE Programme
- NHSG Wider Curriculum Provision
- NHSG Literacy & Oracy Policy
- Accessibility Policy
- GLT Public Sector Duty Quality Statement

2. Our Vision

Our aim is to empower our young women and enrich their lives to ensure they aspire to take their centre stage place in the world. We want students to enjoy learning, to become independent and effective learners and to achieve academic success in an atmosphere that fosters positive relationships and mental health, promotes equity, equality and celebrates diversity.

Our curriculum is broad and balanced; it promotes intellectual challenge, develops creativity and curiosity and empowers our students to articulate their thinking confidently. The curriculum and extracurricular opportunities promote social and cultural enrichment and a strong sense of community. The advice and guidance enable students to make wise, informed and ambitious choices.

We promote the values of **positivity, respect, integrity, courage** and **endeavour**. We want our students to engage with the local and wider community in the belief that they can make a difference.

3. Our Curriculum Intent

Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9)	To broaden knowledge and develop oral literacy
Key stage 4 (years 10-11)	To deepen knowledge
Key Stage 5 (Years 12-13)	To develop scholastic enquiry

4. Aims of our curriculum model

1. Provide a broad and balanced education that meets the needs of all our students.
2. While maintaining high expectations, the model provides the support needed to meet those expectations, such as additional literacy, numeracy and targeted intervention for those at risk of falling behind.
3. Rooted in academic excellence and enriched by diverse cultural, creative, and co-curricular opportunities, our aim is to nurture a love of learning, a resilience in the face of challenges, and an unwavering commitment to personal growth and global citizenship.
4. Equip students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for lifelong learning and active citizenship.
5. Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of students.
6. Ensure the curriculum design integrates diverse voices, histories, and perspectives, promoting understanding and empathy.
7. Use inclusive teaching methods that recognise the varied needs of students, enabling everyone to thrive academically and personally.

8. Provide programmes that encourage critical thinking and open dialogue on issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion.
9. Invite a diverse range of speakers and role models to inspire and reflect the breadth of experiences within our communities
10. Ensure students are well-prepared for key stage assessments, further education, and career pathways.

Curriculum Structure

5. Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9):

Our Key Stage 3 curriculum provides a foundation across a wide range of subjects, ensuring students develop the skills and knowledge required for progression. Students study a full and ambitious curriculum which includes;

- English Language and Literature
- Mathematics
- Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)
- History
- Geography
- 2 Languages (MFL/Latin or 2 MFL)
- Modern Foreign Language includes French, Spanish or German
- Design and Technology (Textiles, Product Design and Food Preparation)
- Computer Science
- Art and Design
- Drama
- Music
- Physical Education (PE)
- Religious Education (RE)
- Personal, Social, Health, and Economic Education (PSHE), including Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)
- ThinkSmart Study Programme: Year 7 only

Citizenship, financial capability and careers education

Our curriculum is designed to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and experiences they need to navigate the world confidently. Citizenship education is embedded throughout our curriculum, PSHE programmes of study and form tutor educational talks. This encourages students to understand their rights and responsibilities, engage in their communities, and develop ethical awareness.

Financial capability is woven into learning to help students make informed money decisions, manage budgets, and understand economic principles in real-life contexts. Students predominately study this during their PSHE lessons.

Careers education is integral, providing guidance, work experience opportunities, and exposure to a wide range of pathways, ensuring students can make informed choices about their futures while connecting classroom learning to the wider world. Where appropriate, topics are linked to particular career pathways.

Our wider curriculum underpins our Key Stage 3 curriculum

Our wider curriculum is vibrant and inspiring, designed to bring the Key Stage 3 curriculum to life. From creative arts and sports to STEM challenges and clubs, students have countless opportunities to explore their passions, develop new skills, and grow in confidence. Every activity is carefully linked to the curriculum, enhancing learning while encouraging teamwork, problem-solving, and independent thinking

From September 2026

Responding to student need and future employability

As technology continues to reshape the job market, early and sustained exposure gives students a competitive advantage. Not all students arrive with equal access to or experience with technology. We are dedicating more curriculum time in Year 7 to help close gaps and ensures equitable access to essential 21st-century skills.

In year 7, we will also be launching a new programme of study called '**ThinkSmart.**' The aims of this curriculum provision will be to;

- Strengthen foundational literacy and comprehension
- Build early critical thinking and reasoning skills
- Develop oracy and academic dialogue
- Promote equity and access to high-level thinking
- Cultivate a culture of academic enquiry

Learning will be organised around themed projects for example, sustainability

Transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3

Year 6 into 7

- As students move into Year 7, our curriculum is carefully designed to build on the knowledge and skills they developed in primary school while inspiring curiosity and confidence in new subjects.
- We place a strong emphasis on reading, vocabulary, and core knowledge to ensure every child can access the full curriculum.
- Early topics are engaging and relatable, helping students feel a sense of belonging as they settle into new routines and expectations.
- We also support students in developing independence and good learning habits, gradually building their confidence as learners. At the start of Year 7, students undertake an emotional literacy programme, which helps them develop self-awareness, manage their emotions, build positive relationships, and settle confidently into secondary school life.
- We offer targeted support programmes, including our Year 7 Transition Programme , peer mentoring, **and** early intervention groups, to help students overcome any challenges they may face and to ensure everyone has the opportunity to thrive and succeed.
- Parents are able to access to year 7 subject year overview along with termly overview documents here: [Nonsuch High School for Girls - Year 7](#)

5.1 Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11):

Our Key Stage 4 curriculum is designed to be challenging, pushing our students to think critically and solve problems, which prepares them for post 16 education and life after school. We aim to ensure that our students leave school with the skills, knowledge, and confidence that they need to succeed. With this in mind we have designed our curriculum model to ensure that it provides students with a well-rounded education and one which underpins our school's values.

At Key Stage 4, all students follow a core curriculum and then select up to 3 GCSEs that align with their interests and aspirations. Including our core provision subjects, students have a choice of up to 17 subjects. Our curriculum is ambitious in terms of the number of GCSE subjects that they study and all students must study a Modern Foreign Language. All are entered for the higher tier examinations unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The core subjects are:

- English Language and Literature
- Mathematics
- Triple science
- Core PE
- PSHE, including RSE
- One Modern Foreign Language
- Last year 2025-2026 cohort: Religious Studies (Full course or half GCSE)
- **NEW for 2026: HPQ level 2 qualification**

5.2 Our core provision

PSHE, including RSE, PE and Religious Studies form part of our core curriculum. Every child has a legal entitlement to all of these subjects.

In terms of academia, **Religious Education** has shown to improve student knowledge of global affairs, it promotes a broader understanding of views and beliefs, develops critical thinking and an appreciation of ethics. It also underpins our school values which include inclusivity, positivity and respect. Our Religious Education curriculum not only reflects the diverse backgrounds of our student body but it also ensures that it reflects a balanced view of different religions and worldviews.

Religious Education (RE) is a statutory entitlement for all students from Year 7 through Year 13. From September 2026, students in Key Stage 4 will have the option to study RS at GCSE level. All students will receive RE education through the school's assembly, tutorial, and PSHE programme. In Year 10, students will also complete wider reading of a non-fiction philosophical text to deepen their understanding and critical thinking. This approach supports the development of informed, reflective citizens who can engage thoughtfully with ethical issues, society, and the wider world.

Parents retain the right to withdraw their child from Religious Education. However, should a student choose to pursue RS (Religious Studies) at GCSE, the school expects them to complete the course in its entirety.

Studying a **Modern Foreign Language** equips our students with valuable communication skills and broadens their understanding of different cultures, fostering global awareness and cultural sensitivity. In an increasingly interconnected world, language proficiency enhances career opportunities across a range of industries, from business and international relations to tourism and technology. Additionally, learning a new language improves cognitive abilities such as problem-solving, memory, and critical thinking. By developing

these skills, students not only gain a competitive edge in the job market but also enrich their personal and academic growth.

Underpinning our academic and pastoral curriculum, students lead and participate in an educational approach called **'Philosophy for Children.'** This approach encourages students to think critically, creatively, and collaboratively through open-ended discussions on topics like ethics, justice, and identity. It creates a safe space for students to express ideas, listen to others, and develop reasoning skills. P4C also promotes Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) by fostering empathy, challenging biases, and ensuring every voice is heard, helping students become socially aware and reflective individuals. It also aligns with our school values of positivity and respect.

From September 2026 all students will study for **Higher Project Qualification (HPQ)**. Studying the Higher Project Qualification (HPQ) in Key Stage 4 gives students a unique opportunity to take charge of their learning, exploring a topic they are passionate about while developing critical research, analysis, and project-management skills. It builds independent thinking, problem-solving, and presentation abilities, preparing students for post-16 study and beyond. Completing an HPQ demonstrates ambition, self-motivation, and academic rigour, qualities highly valued by colleges, employers, and future pathways, while promoting confidence, resilience, and a deeper understanding of how different subjects connect in the real world. This course will encompass further development of study and core computing skills.

5.3 GCSE Subject Options

All students must choose up to 3 further GCSE subject from the list below.

- Humanities (History, Geography, RS)
- Modern Foreign Languages (French, German, Spanish)
- Latin
- Creative Arts (Art, Music, Drama, Photography)
- Technology-based subjects (Product Design and Design Technology, Design Textiles, Computing)
- Astronomy

Enrichment course: Certificate in Further Maths studied in years 10 and 11

The Certificate in Further Mathematics is a Level 2 qualification. It is not considered a GCSE and is not a requirement for progression to A-Level Mathematics or A- Level Further Mathematics. However, it provides an additional challenge for some students who are able to master GCSE content more quickly.

Selecting students for a Certificate in Further Maths requires a careful balance between academic ability, motivation, and readiness for advanced content. At the end of Key Stage 3, the school will use their professional judgement to ensure that those students who are selected to study the course can cope with the demands of this enrichment qualification without having an adverse impact on their other studies.

5.4 Key Stage 5 Curriculum (Years 12 and 13)

In Year 12, most students study three A-Level subjects along with an 'Elective Enrichment Option.' The school offers some students an opportunity to study a fourth A Level. This is for students who have achieved an Average Point Score (APS) of a grade 8 along with two grade 9s in two of their chosen subjects. Students who start on four A Levels, must complete the all four subject courses.

Students have a choice of selecting from 21 A-Level choices. In the event that the school is unable to offer an A-Level subject due to limited demand, we look to work with our partnership schools within our Trust. More information about our Sixth Form provision can be found [here](#).

6.0 Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Our curriculum is designed to be inclusive and accessible to all students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), English as an Additional Language (EAL), and those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Over the last 4 years, the school has prioritised curriculum planning time to promote EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) within the curriculum. This is to ensure that all students feel represented, respected, and valued within their learning environment. By incorporating diverse perspectives, cultures, and experiences into teaching materials and classroom discussions, students should see themselves within our curriculum. We want our students to thrive in a diverse world, equipping them with the skills to collaborate effectively with people from different backgrounds and contribute to a more equitable society.

7.0 Personal, Social and Health Education

The curriculum extends beyond academic subjects to promote students' personal development. Our PSHE programme is rooted in our school values of POSITIVITY, RESPECT, INTEGRITY, COURAGE, ENDEAVOUR (PRICE) and aims to empower each child with the knowledge and skills required to safely and successfully make informed decisions, enable them to support their own wellbeing and form positive relationships within our diverse community. This will aid them in navigating their way through life whilst at school and for the years that follow.

We recognise that PSHE can encompass many areas of study and so our programme draws on the statutory content already outlined in the national curriculum, the basic school curriculum and in statutory guidance on: drug education, financial education, relationship and sex education (RSE) and the importance of physical activity and diet for a healthy lifestyle.

8.0 Curriculum and Assessment

- Regular assessment is used to monitor progress, inform teaching, and support student development.
- Formative assessment methods include classroom questioning, peer and self-assessment, and teacher feedback.
- Summative assessments include termly tests, NEA (Non-Examined Assessments), and end-of-year exams.
- Curriculum implementation and impact are monitored through lesson observations, work scrutiny, student feedback, and attainment data analysis.

9.0 The Wider Curriculum

The wider curriculum refers to all the learning experiences and opportunities provided to students beyond the core academic subjects. It encompasses extracurricular activities, enrichment programs, and personal development opportunities that support students' broader skills, interests, and well-being. This can include sports, music, drama, clubs, educational trips, leadership opportunities, community service, and life skills education, such as financial literacy or mental health awareness. The wider curriculum plays a key role in fostering creativity, resilience, teamwork, and social responsibility, helping students develop into well-rounded individuals prepared for life beyond school.

The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities to enhance the curriculum, including:

- Sports teams and fitness clubs.
- Creative arts groups (choir, orchestra, drama productions, art workshops).
- Academic enrichment (STEM clubs, language societies, debate teams).
- Community and volunteering programs.
- Educational trips and residential visits.

For more information, please see our Wider Curriculum Provision which can be found under the curriculum area on our website.

10.0 Linking curriculum learning to careers

Integrating careers into the curriculum is essential for helping students understand the real-world applications of what they are learning and how it connects to future career opportunities. Careers education is woven throughout our curriculum in the following ways:

Where possible, curriculum topics are linked to real-life scenarios. Career exploration and awareness begin in Year 7. Our Key Stage 3 curriculum outlines, where appropriate, how the concepts and skills taught can be connected to specific careers. The use of technology and digital tools is emphasised within our computer science curriculum, alongside the school-wide use of Microsoft Teams and SharePoint.

Our curriculum fosters critical thinking and problem-solving while providing opportunities for communication and teamwork—skills that are essential in nearly every career. Guest speakers, field trips, videos, and our broader extracurricular provision further highlight various career paths. For example, we were delighted to have author Sara Barnard deliver a writing workshop to our year 9 students this year. As a diverse community, we make every effort to recognise and celebrate individuals from different backgrounds, genders, and cultures excelling in various career fields. For example, our student leadership team organises an exceptional program of events to mark International Women’s Day.

11.0 Disapplication of a subject from the school’s curriculum

Disapplication of a curriculum subject refers to the formal process where a student is exempt from studying a specific part of the school’s curriculum and this takes place under **exceptional** circumstances. The school will take a holistic approach when judging whether it is in the best interest of the child to be withdrawn from an aspect of the curriculum. An evidence-based approach will be taken which also encompasses the parent/carer’s view and student’s view. The school will want to see that all supportive measures have been exhausted before a disapplication request is processed.

12.0 Evaluation and Review

This document will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Headteacher Curriculum, Headteacher and Governing Body to ensure it remains effective and responsive to student needs and statutory requirements.