



## Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School Curriculum Policy

**POLICY TITLE:** Curriculum Policy

**STATUS:** Statutory

**REVIEWED BY:** Board of Trustees

**DATE REVIEWED:** September 2026

**NEXT REVIEW:** September 2027

**Assistant Headteacher: David Robson**

### 1. Vision Statement

The central aim of the school is to encourage the development of each student's inner resources, so that they acquire the wisdom and integrity to make positive choices in a rapidly changing world. Most importantly, students leave our school as well-qualified, confident, caring and happy members of their community, equipped to be capable of supporting themselves financially, contributing economically and socially to wider communities.

We strongly believe that all students are individuals and that all should pursue excellence and develop their talents in academic, creative, physical and social skills. We provide an environment in which learning can flourish and be enjoyed not just as a means to good academic results but as an interest for life, motivated by the school's commitment to provide the students with access to a full range of study and enrichment experiences.

Curriculum matters, as it defines the knowledge and experiences that learners will receive beyond their home environment. At Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School, we believe that a world-class curriculum is ambitious, coherent and continually evolving. It introduces pupils to the rich disciplinary traditions of each subject, opens up worlds beyond their own experience and prepares them to thrive in a rapidly changing society. We aim for a culture of curriculum as one of unashamed intellectualism. We recognise that curriculum work is never completed; it is a never-ending and essential activity at the core of teaching.

### 2. Curriculum Intent

Our curriculum aims/intends to develop, sustain and annually review a rich, broad, balanced and rounded curriculum that is ambitious for all learners. It is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment. Our curriculum:

- Creates an aspirational, high-achievement culture

- Takes into account individual needs and styles
- Develops resilience in academic study, supports wise choices and fosters good physical and mental health
- Unlocks the potential of all students regardless of their background
- Raises standards of attainment across all subjects and promotes female representation in science, technology, engineering and maths careers
- Actively promotes equality and diversity in the local and wider community and engenders mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Is founded on the principle that learning is a change in long-term memory (Kirschner, Sweller and Clark, 2006) and ensures students acquire the essential knowledge, concepts, and overarching ideas of individual subjects, which is an entitlement for every child.
- Allows students to learn skills alongside a firm foundation of knowledge, with particular focus on,
  - interleaving and retrieval to aid memory and recall, encouraging deeper learning
  - equipping students with extensive vocabulary.
- Seeks not only to teach what is known within each subject, but also how knowledge is created, tested, challenged and refined; understanding the distinctive ways in which different disciplines construct knowledge.
- Recognises Key Stage 3 to be the “intellectual powerhouse of the school” (Myatt and Tomsett, 2021) because:
  - Students will have a strong grounding as preparation for key stage 4 in the core subjects and for those subjects which they select as an option
  - Students who do not choose to take it as an option will nevertheless have a legacy of interesting knowledge & ideas on which they can draw on in the future

The school’s curriculum is broad and includes the national curriculum, religious education and age-appropriate relationships and sex education.

These curriculum aims are underpinned by our values:

Courage, Courtesy, Creativity, Integrity, Resilience, Respect, Wisdom

This policy was reviewed in the context of the major government publication [Curriculum and Assessment Review Final Report: Building a world-class curriculum for all](#). It demonstrates that our curriculum, and the recent developments we have made to it, align with the Review’s guiding rationale, particularly in areas such as providing choice rather than forcing the EBacc route when it is not appropriate for the student.

### 3. 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 we have chosen to follow.

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 the statutory requirements for careers education as outlined in the Gatsby Benchmarks, and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education’s [Academy trust governance guide](#).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

### 4. Roles and responsibilities

#### 4.1 The board of trustees

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

The board of trustees will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets

- The school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, maths, science and (subject to providing the right to withdraw) religious education, and enough teaching time is provided for students to cover the requirements of the funding agreement
- Proper provision is made for students with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- All courses provided for students below the age of 19 that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs and A-levels, are 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

## **4.2 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 intent and aims which reflect the aims of the school
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the board of trustees
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The board of trustees is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The board of trustees is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions
- Proper provision is in place for students with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN

## **4.3 Other staff**

Other staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

Heads of Department and subject leaders are responsible for implementing the curriculum in their subject areas. Heads of Year are responsible for implementing the pastoral curriculum within their year teams. Other members of staff are responsible for specific aspects of the curriculum such as literacy, numeracy, STEM, Careers Education, Information, PSHE, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG), etc

# **5. Components and features within the curriculum**

## **5.1 Additional Needs**

We recognise that some students will need additional support from time to time. With this in mind the school's inclusion team implements purposeful intervention, where the actions are regularly reviewed, assessed and amended where appropriate. The team includes a number of learning support assistants who offer support across all areas of the curriculum. The Inclusion team facilitate learning and give personalised mentoring opportunities alongside close liaison with the student's teachers, form tutor and beyond to the pastoral team and home.

## **5.2 British Values**

Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School is a cohesive and integrated community which values understanding of people from different backgrounds and with different beliefs, creating a more inclusive and diverse society. We provide many opportunities for students to learn about British Values through subject areas, assemblies, displays, trips and enrichment activities. British Values are embedded into school routines such as student

participation in whole school elections to vote for their student council representatives and our International Day celebrations. British values, which underpin all that we do, are:

- Democracy
- The rule of the law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect

Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. (Our school goes beyond 'tolerance' and believes that those with different faiths and beliefs enrich our community. We aim to promote understanding and acceptance of people from different backgrounds and with different beliefs, and help to create a more inclusive and diverse society.)

Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School is committed to a balanced treatment of political issues in all teaching and forbids the promotion of partisan political views.

### **5.3 Pedagogy**

We take account of research-based ideas when designing our approach to curriculum delivery. This leads to a clear and coherent approach across the school. Each subject area delivers a carefully planned and sequenced curriculum.

Current priorities include,

- accessibility of the curriculum for all students through adaptive teaching
- strategies to challenge students
- metacognition

checking for understanding

### **5.4 Challenge and Resilience**

We aim to create opportunities for all students to achieve their full potential. Through our teaching we challenge students of all abilities to tackle difficult problems whilst supporting them and equipping them with strategies and techniques to follow a structured, logical approach.

### **5.5 Knowledge and Skills**

In addition to subject knowledge, young people need to develop essential skills and qualities for learning, life and employment. These include skills that relate to learning in subjects as well as other more generic, transferable skills. A dynamic, forward-thinking curriculum creates opportunities for learners to develop as self-managers, creative thinkers, reflective learners, problem-solvers, team workers, independent learners and effective communicators.

### **5.6 Careers**

Impartial careers advice and guidance is a fundamental part of our careers advice programme, which is informative and relevant to address the needs of every student. Through discrete curriculum teaching across all areas, including Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), students link subject learning to careers. In doing so, learners also develop the skills they will need to adapt to an ever changing workforce. Through PSHE lessons, students have access to labour market information to enable them to make informed choices about their next steps. They also have opportunities to engage with employers through careers events, work experience and our after-school careers talks programme. Students have a range of meaningful encounters with Further and Higher education providers to consider their next steps. They also have the opportunity to meet with a qualified careers adviser to receive personal advice.

### **5.7 Extra-Curricular Clubs**

We want students to enjoy learning and be able to have extended opportunities to explore areas of real interest through lunchtime and after school activities and clubs. These include LAMDA, Art Clubs,, Science Club, Computer Coding Club, Juggling Club, History Club and Chess Club. The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme gives students opportunities to develop skills including leadership, teamwork and entrepreneurship.

### **5.8 Literacy**

We believe that high levels of literacy are core to the success of all our students to enable them to access the whole curriculum and make progress in all subjects while also providing essential skills for life beyond school. As such, we have appointed a Literacy Coordinator to lead, manage and develop literacy throughout the school. Our vision is to equip all students with the literacy skills to enable them to use their subject knowledge to read, comprehend and express their understanding in a fluent, formal and organised manner.

Through our focus on disciplinary literacy, we provide our own video lessons every fortnight that are delivered to each form throughout the key stages addressing key literacy skills needed for writing, reading and oracy success in every subject. Subject teachers then focus on the key skills within their lessons to allow students to practise and employ their new skill within each subject. We organise various outside agencies to work with our students, for example an academic writing workshop from the Royal Literacy Trust to work with sixth form students to raise standards of academic writing.

### **5.9 Literacy Intervention and DEAR**

Students who have a reading age below their chronological age in years 7-11 receive Literacy Intervention. This is run by the Literacy Coordinator each morning between 8.30am and 9am. Students with a reading age of above 8 years follow the Lexia Powerup online literacy programme while students with a reading age of below 8 years follow a synthetic phonics programme. Progress is recorded through the Lexia programme and parents receive half termly progress reports. Students are encouraged to work on the programme at home as well.

The daily 'Drop Everything And Read' (DEAR) programme allows all students to read independently for 10-15 minutes, using their own books or academic literature chosen by their subject teachers.

### **5.10 Numeracy**

Numeracy is the ability to understand and work with numbers. It means the understanding of how mathematics is used in the real world and being able to apply it to make the best possible decisions. It is about thinking and reasoning, about doing sums, showing all workings in a clear and logical manner. It means being able to interpret data charts and diagrams. At GCSE level, it features mathematics problems in real-world situations and demonstrates the most efficient ways to calculate the correct solution. A Numeracy Coordinator leads on implementing numeracy provision across the school.

Approach to calculations:

- All teachers will discourage students from writing down answers only and encourage students to show their numerical working out within the main body of their work.
- It is recognised that there is never only one correct method and students will be encouraged to develop their own correct methods where appropriate rather than be taught 'set' ways.
- Wherever possible, students will be allowed and encouraged to 'vocalise' their maths - a necessary step towards full understanding for many students.
- All students should be helped to understand the methods they are using or being taught - students gain more and are likely to remember much more easily if they understand rather than are merely repeating by rote.

### **5.11 Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths**

We provide opportunities for students from all backgrounds to excel in STEM-related subjects and to explore STEM courses and careers. Examples include the provision of in-school and after-school clubs and talks that cover a variety of STEM areas and the opportunity to participate in online career mentoring schemes such as the STEM SMART programme and the London STEM Ambassador Hub. Triple Science students in Years 10 and 11 have bespoke STEM lessons designed to enhance their understanding of the subjects and inspire their entrance into the QEGS Science Fair and national science competitions such as 'The Big Bang Science Competition' in Birmingham.

### **5.12 SMSC**

Opportunities for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural learning are embedded throughout the subject curriculum, reinforced through tutor sessions and enrichment activities and are at the heart of everything we do.

We provide a wide variety of activities to develop students' *social* skills and community participation.

Our aim is to create a school where students,

- celebrate, understand and appreciate the wide range of cultural influences on their own and others' lives
- have opportunities to reflect on their own spiritual beliefs and those of others
- discuss and understand moral issues whilst still understanding the consequences of their own actions

### 5.13 Sports and Healthy Lifestyles

We offer the chance for students to take part in a wide variety of sports both in the curriculum and through extra-curricular opportunities. Focus is on both competitive sport as well as developing lifelong participation and an active, healthy lifestyle. Popular activities include athletics, cross-country, netball, rounders, football, swimming, badminton, dance and gymnastics.

### 5.14 Trips and Visits

The school has a strong tradition of organising trips and visits for students. These events act as motivation and inspiration as well as enhancing and enriching the curriculum. Examples include visits to local landmarks, art galleries and the theatre. We run relevant overseas trips in a variety of subject areas. Our proximity to Central London allows us to benefit from visits to events-such as careers fairs, mentoring opportunities and visits to universities.

### 5.15 Use of Technology

Students use a wide range of technology especially in areas such as Computing, Design & Technology, Music, Media and Science. Google Classroom is used to share lesson resources and for setting and marking some homework. We use iPads, Apple Mac, Chrome and PC computers, laser cutters, 3D printers and a range of subscription based websites.

### 5.16 Wellbeing

The pastoral team leads and supports positive emotional health, wellbeing and engagement across school. Form tutors and year teams are well placed to keep a watchful eye over the students in their care and identify opportunities to offer support and guidance. Tutor sessions, assemblies and 'Thought for the Day' allow students to focus on developing their resilience, confidence and capacity to learn in a nurturing environment. The PSHE curriculum includes a range of topics that raise awareness and understanding and promote strategies for developing a positive approach and adopting a 'Growth Mindset'.

### 5.17 Daily Reflection and Statutory Provision

Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School provides a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. This statutory duty is fulfilled through our daily Thought for the Day sessions (delivered during form time), and through assemblies. This provision is designed to promote the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of our students by offering a daily opportunity for shared reflection on school values, key events and current affairs.

## 6. Organisation and planning

### Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 & 9)

| Subject                      | Hours per fortnight |        |        |
|------------------------------|---------------------|--------|--------|
|                              | Year 7              | Year 8 | Year 9 |
| English                      | 6                   | 6      | 7      |
| Mathematics                  | 7                   | 6      | 6      |
| Science                      | 6                   | 7      | 6      |
| Art                          | 2                   | 2      | 2      |
| Computing                    | 2                   | 2      | 2      |
| Drama                        | 2                   | 1      | 2      |
| French                       | 0                   | 3*     | 3      |
| Further Personal Development | 0                   | 2*     | 0      |
| Geography                    | 3                   | 3      | 3      |
| Global Perspectives          | 1                   | 0      | 0      |
| History                      | 3                   | 3      | 3      |
| Music                        | 2                   | 2      | 2      |
| PSHE                         | 2                   | 2      | 2      |
| PE                           | 4                   | 4      | 4      |

|                          |   |        |   |
|--------------------------|---|--------|---|
| <b>Religious Studies</b> | 2 | 3      | 2 |
| <b>Spanish</b>           | 4 | 3 / 4* | 3 |
| <b>Technology</b>        | 3 | 3      | 3 |
| <b>Reading</b>           | 1 | 0      | 0 |

\* In Year 8 (and Year 9 from September 2027) most students follow the Further Personal Development pathway. In Year 8 this alternates between problem-solving/numeracy skills and leadership skills, alongside four hours of Spanish. Selected students instead take French alongside Spanish (three hours of each). Selection is determined by the Modern Foreign Languages department based on Year 7 Spanish progress.

- Students are taught in mixed ability teaching groups, apart from Mathematics
- Global Perspectives gives Year 7 students the opportunity to explore different cultures and human experiences from around the world. Resources from Lyfta provide the foundation for this course.
- Students start elements of GCSE in English, Mathematics, Religious Studies and Science in Year 9
- Literacy and numeracy catch-up sessions are run as appropriate
- Homework is set according to the homework timetable

### Key Stage 4 (Years 10 & 11)

| Subject                       | Hours per fortnight |         |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------|
|                               | Year 10             | Year 11 |
| <b>English</b>                | 8                   | 8       |
| <b>Mathematics</b>            | 8                   | 8       |
| <b>Science (Double Award)</b> | 9                   | 9       |
| <b>PSHE</b>                   | 0                   | 0       |
| <b>PE</b>                     | 2                   | 2       |
| <b>Religious Studies</b>      | 3                   | 3       |

Students take the following GCSE examinations,

- English Language and English Literature
- Mathematics
- Combined Science Double Award or Triple Science
- Religious Studies
- Either 3 or 4 options subjects according to the pathways outlined below.

### Key Stage 4 Pathways

Based on the school's progress data, each student will be guided to consider one or two option pathways. There are four options pathways offered by the school. All students must follow one of these.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>EBacc</b></p> <p>This option offer is tailored to students who want to secure the EBacc with the flexibility to study a wide range of subjects. It is suited to students who have a secure grounding across the range of subjects in Key Stage 3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• French or Spanish</li> <li>• Geography or History</li> <li>• 2 additional subjects from the options below</li> </ul>                                                                                                       | <p><b>EBacc plus Triple Science and STEM enrichment</b></p> <p>This option offer is tailored to support breadth and academic success for students with a particular interest and aptitude in the Sciences, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• French or Spanish</li> <li>• Geography or History</li> <li>• Triple Science</li> <li>• 1 additional subject from the options below</li> </ul>                                                  |
| <p><b>EBacc Plus</b></p> <p>This option is tailored to offer additional support to help students to secure the EBacc. Students opt for one subject less, which provides time for additional support in the EBacc subjects. It is suited to students who have a developing grasp of the subjects studied in Key Stage 3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• French or Spanish</li> <li>• Geography or History</li> <li>• EBacc Plus support sessions</li> <li>• 1 additional subject from the options below</li> </ul> | <p><b>Non-EBacc with additional English and/or Maths</b></p> <p>This pathway offers support to students who may prefer a less traditional route through Key Stage 4. It offers greater flexibility in subject choice alongside additional support in English and/or Maths.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• French or Geography or History or Spanish</li> <li>• Additional English and/or Maths support sessions</li> <li>• 2 additional subjects from the options below</li> </ul> |

### Option Subjects (5 hours each per fortnight)

**Arts** (comprising Art & Design, Music, Drama, Media and Physical Education)

**Design and Technology** (comprising Computer Science, Design & Technology and Food Preparation & Nutrition)

**Humanities** (comprising Geography, History, Business, Economics and Level 1/2 BTEC in Health & Social Care)

**Modern Foreign Languages** (comprising French and Spanish)

Options are selected in Year 9. No changes can be made to courses in Year 10 after 30th September.

**Computing** is a foundation subject and as such, all students have an entitlement to:

- develop their capability, creativity and knowledge in computer science, digital media and information technology
- develop and apply their analytic, problem-solving, design, and computational thinking skills

- understand how changes in technology affect safety, including new ways to protect their online privacy and identity, and how to report a range of concerns

*GCSE Computer Science is an option subject. Elements of Computing are delivered across the curriculum in a variety of subject areas. In addition, the development of analytical, problem solving and computational thinking skills are central to the Mathematics curriculum. Additionally, there is emphasis in the PSHE curriculum on the impacts of technology including how to ensure online privacy. Students following the Triple Science and STEM pathway will develop their computing skills across key stage 4 through enrichment activities.*

**PSHE** is delivered through dedicated sessions when the school timetable is suspended.

## Sixth Form

With the 16-19 stage in mind, Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School will aim to:

- ensure that the progression of students through the 14-19 continuum is effected smoothly
- provide access for all students to a curriculum which meets the needs of the individual within a framework of broad and balanced provision;
- facilitate progression to post-18 employment, Further Education and Higher Education.
- Where the school is unable to offer a course we will seek to work with other local institutions to maximise the breadth available.

## Advanced Level Subjects

|                                                 |                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Art                                             | History                                  |
| Biology                                         | Mathematics                              |
| Business Studies                                | Media Studies                            |
| Chemistry                                       | Music                                    |
| Computer Science                                | Physical Education                       |
| Drama                                           | Physics                                  |
| Economics                                       | Politics                                 |
| English Language and Literature                 | Product Design                           |
| English Literature                              | Product Design Textiles                  |
| <i>Extended Project Qualification (level 3)</i> | Psychology                               |
| French                                          | Religious Studies: Philosophy and Ethics |
| Further Mathematics                             | Sociology                                |
| Geography                                       | Spanish                                  |

Each A Level subject is allocated 9 hours per fortnight teaching time in Year 12 and 10 hours per fortnight in Year 13.

Students need sufficient knowledge and understanding of the Year 12 A Level content to be able to progress successfully into Year 13. Students need to demonstrate this knowledge and understanding when they sit internal examinations in January and April of Year 12. Where required, resit examinations are taken in the summer of Year 12. If a student does not achieve a grade E or above in the Year 12 resit examination for a subject, they are unable to continue to study that subject in Year 13 as they have not got sufficient knowledge and understanding to be successful in the subject. The school works with the student and family through discussion of alternatives in cases where someone is not ready to progress into Year 13.

We offer students many opportunities to take part in enrichment activities, extra-curricular activities, visits and trips.

## 7. Inclusion

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

- More able students
- Students with low prior attainment
- Students from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Students with SEN
- Students with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that students with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, ensuring ambition remains high and that appropriate, well-judged adaptations are made to ensure no significant barriers to learning exist, allowing every pupil to achieve.

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

Further information can be found in our Public Sector Equality Duty statement and in our Inclusion policy.

### **8. Monitoring arrangements**

Trustees monitor whether the school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a “broad and balanced curriculum” which includes the required subjects, through regular updates at governing body meetings, school visits and meetings with school leaders.

Heads of department/subject leaders and the leadership team monitor the way subjects are taught throughout the school by regular learning walks, work sampling, student voice, department meetings and self-evaluation cycles. Three formal lesson observation cycles throughout the year supplement this with formal drop-ins identifying strengths and areas for development, which provide the focus for ongoing CPD to ensure high quality, consistent curriculum implementation across all subjects.

Heads of department/subject leaders also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

### **9. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Inclusion policy
- Public Sector Equality Duty statement
- Relationship and Sex Education Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Careers Education and Guidance Policy

### **10. Curriculum Publication**

In addition to this policy being published on the school website, parents (including prospective parents) can find further information on curriculum provision for individual subjects via the school website.