



## PLYMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

**POLICY:**                    **Curriculum Policy**

**SLT LINK MEMBER:**                    **Mary Utton**

**GOVERNORS SUB COMMITTEE:**                    **T & L**

This policy was adopted/updated:                    January 2014

This policy will be reviewed:                    January 2015

Statutory Policy:                    NO

Source:                    School

# PLYMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

## CURRICULUM POLICY

### Rationale

The curriculum policy is a statutory requirement. The curriculum policy is essential to ensure the curriculum is reviewed and developed and to help stakeholders understand the underlying principles behind decisions past and present that have an impact on the delivered curriculum. The policy should reflect the aims of the school and is based on a set of principles that lie at the heart of education as outlined below.

### Vision

Plymouth High School aims to be an outstanding Grammar School for the 21st century remaining true to the philosophy of the school's motto 'For Life Not School We Learn'.

A school which:

- Promotes a culture of high aspiration enabling personal and academic success.
- Prepares students to become confident, independent learners.
- Provides an outstanding education for all, the key to this being high quality teaching.
- Provides enjoyment, excitement and challenge for all, stimulating an enthusiasm for lifelong learning.

So that our students become active citizens, equipped to succeed in a world of rapid change.

### Values and Beliefs

This school is committed to the promotion of a group of core values in the expectation that they will be embraced by all members of our wider school community. These core values are:

- Consideration for others
- Tolerance and Respect
- Honesty and Integrity
- Fairness

By embodying these values in the day-to-day running of the school we aspire to create a vibrant and cohesive academic environment.

All our students are gifted, many with unconventional talents. Our aim is to seek out these gifts and talents, give direction and opportunity for them to flourish and to celebrate success.

We are exceptionally proud of our students. They enjoy being at school, are bright and happy and bring unique talents to our community.

Plymouth High School provides the freedom and security for our students to be themselves.

Our students:

- Can access a wide range of opportunities which enable them to follow their interests and aspirations.

- Can access a curriculum that is designed to ensure that all of our students experience a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which is also flexible and evolving, able to meet the needs of all our learners and appropriate to the rapidly changing world in which they live and work.
- Are challenged to achieve their potential and attain the highest standards.
- Are treated as individuals. We support them as they grow into thinking young people and caring, active citizens.
- Develop an understanding of internationalism, global citizenship and intercultural awareness. We hope they will contribute to the development of a just and equal society. Once they leave school they are ready to take positions of responsibility and leadership in a global society.
- Develop self-esteem and a positive sense of identity. They are able to form worthwhile relationships based on tolerance and respect.
- Take personal responsibility for their learning and contribute to high standards of behaviour and expectation.
- Ask questions, solve problems, apply their skills and defend their arguments with clarity and determination.
- Are encouraged to be independent and engage critically with ideas. We challenge them to take intellectual risks in every direction.

We work hard to ensure learning is always enjoyable with lessons that are creative, imaginative and exciting.

### **Guidelines**

This policy has been devised in the light of the National Curriculum changes taking place from 2014, the new GCSE and A Level specifications and a variety of Government documents including the 'National Curriculum for England 2014'.

### **Responsibilities**

#### The Governing Body

- To review regularly the school curriculum policy and make amendments to reflect any changes nationally.
- To have an overview of local and national issues that will affect and shape any future curriculum.
- To have an overview of the local needs and ways the school curriculum may address these needs.
- To have an overview of curriculum issues both in and outside school at Key Stages 3, 4 and 5.
- To have an overview of curriculum issues relating to Key Stage 2 and Higher Education and the effect this has on the curriculum.
- To have an appropriate understanding of the school's curriculum model and the impact this has on the curriculum on offer, on student progress and students achievement.

#### The Headteacher

- To have an understanding of local and national issues that will affect and shape any future curriculum
- To have an understanding of the local needs and ways the school curriculum may address these needs.
- To have an understanding of issues relating to Key Stage 2 and Higher Education and the effect this has on the curriculum.

- To ensure an appropriate and relevant curriculum is on offer to students of the school and to monitor its impact on the students with regard to standards, achievement and progress.
- To review annually the curriculum model/plan.
- To ensure a timetable is devised to reflect the needs of the students and financial restraints within which the school operates.

#### The School Leadership Team

- To have an understanding of local and national issues and consider how this may affect the shape of any future curriculum.
- To have an understanding of the local needs and consider ways the school curriculum may address these needs.
- To have an understanding of issues relating to Key Stage 2 and Higher Education and consider the implications for 11-16 and 14-19 learning.
- To review annually the curriculum model/plan, present this to Governors, and consult with other appropriate groups within the school and beyond.
- To question staff and suggest ideas to develop the curriculum.
- To devise a timetable to reflect the needs of the students and financial restraints within which the school operates.
- To have a working understanding of the curriculum on offer in the curriculum areas they line manage.
- To evaluate the impact of the curriculum regularly through line management of Departments.

#### Head of Department / Subject Leader

- To have a good understanding of local and national curriculum developments in their subject area and consider how this may affect the shape of any future curriculum.
- To have an understanding of the local needs and consider ways these needs may be addressed within their subject area.
- To have an understanding of issues relating to Key Stage 2 and Higher Education and consider the effect this has on the curriculum within their subject area.
- To analyse student attainment data to evaluate relevance and effectiveness of curriculum provision.
- To implement changes within their subject area to improve the curriculum being delivered based on student needs, abilities, aspirations, local and national agendas.
- To seek to develop the curriculum for their subject area.
- To ensure the curriculum is delivered in line with other school policies including the Learning and Teaching policy.
- To review the curriculum in their subject area regularly.
- To support the devising of a timetable to reflect the needs of the students within their subject area and the restraints of the whole school.
- To monitor the curriculum regularly through line management of their curriculum area.

#### Classroom Teacher

- To deliver the curriculum in line with the school's Learning and Teaching policy.
- To ensure they have at least a good working knowledge of the area they are responsible for delivering.
- To continually develop their knowledge of the curriculum they are responsible for delivering.
- To contribute their practical experience of the curriculum in action to the development of the curriculum.
- To differentiate the delivered curriculum to enable access to all learners.

### Support Staff

- To develop a working knowledge of the curriculum in which they support students.
- To use any individual skills to enhance and differentiate the curriculum.
- To contribute their working knowledge of the curriculum in action to the development of the curriculum.

### **The Curriculum**

The learning journey through the school is broadly divided into three phases but the barriers between these are not as fixed as in the past and there are many opportunities for students to progress at their own pace and take examinations at the time that suits them best.

### **Key Stage 3**

The majority of students spend years 7 and 8 in Key Stage 3. As well as the core subjects of English, Maths and Science all students choose courses from a range of other subjects which are underpinned by our specialisms of Technology and Modern Foreign Languages. The subjects studied throughout this phase of school are Technology, ICT, French or German and a second language choice from year 8 which could include Chinese, Italian or Spanish, History, Geography, Art, Music, Drama, RE and PE. In addition students examine aspects of Citizenship and Wellbeing in order to develop the important skills they need in life and in their learning. The curriculum is kept under constant review and developed to meet the needs of the students.

### **Key Stage 4**

The building blocks for GCSE work are laid down in year 9 with students specialising in their chosen GCSE subjects from year 10. English, Maths, Science and a technology subject are all compulsory. Students then opt to take further subjects in the Arts, Humanities and Languages. Most students aim to take nine or ten GCSEs.

The English Baccalaureate of English, Maths, Science, Language and either History or Geography is not compulsory, but most will achieve this within their best eight measure.

### Students studying GCSEs

Students are not allowed to drop GCSE options without due consideration and only then in exceptional circumstances.

The following procedures are in place:

- Teachers should never instigate a discussion about a student dropping a GCSE chosen by a student.
- If a teacher considers that a student is struggling with the subject for whatever reason, discussion needs to take place between subject staff, tutor, Head of Key Stage and Deputy Head-teacher.
- Consideration must be given to the student's programme of study as a whole as well as any intervention strategies.
- Any final decision will be made by the Deputy Headteacher.

### **Post-16**

The Sixth Form is thriving and active and is open to both girls and boys. Again, the provision is varied. The core package most students opt to study is three A levels with additional elements including the AS Extended Project. Our most academic students will take four AS levels in year 12 plus the AS Extended Project and three A2 levels in year 13.

**Procedures**

The curriculum model / plan will be reviewed annually by the SLT and presented to Governors and staff. The draft timetable will be written early in June to allow amendments and improvements to be made. Monitoring will take place throughout the year by a variety of means including Line Management meetings and analysis of appropriate data.

Complaints made by parents will be dealt with informally and then through the usual school complaints procedure if an informal resolution is not achieved.