

	Policy Name: Curriculum Policy
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	This policy is reviewed by the Education Committee Policy revised annually or as regulations or review demands

## Curriculum Policy

The curriculum reflects the Catholic foundation of the School and is rooted in the convictions of its foundress, Cornelia Connelly. She recognised that not only should ‘the wants of the age’ be met, but also that the girls be educated for the future. She believed they must have a breadth and depth of opportunity. The curriculum for all girls is wide and varied and all subjects that make up the curriculum should be valued equally. Creativity, imagination and training the aesthetic sensibility are as important as numeracy, literacy, scientific and research skills. We value achievement and expertise, knowledge and understanding in all forms of physical, mental and spiritual learning, through every subject and activity on offer.

Our curriculum aims to ensure that we meet the needs and interests of each girl, taking into account their ages, and aptitudes. It challenges the most able and supports the learning of those with specific learning difficulties. Base line assessments to include the Mayfield Entrance Exams and MidYIS, Yellis and Alis testing allow us to effectively track progression and ensure that each girl achieves her full academic potential. Provision is made to make the curriculum accessible to those with English as a Second Language and to those with any other special need, physical, intellectual, or emotional. Within each subject, all pupils should achieve their full potential with continuity and progression of learning being maintained throughout. Cornelia Connolly believed that in her schools no girl should consider herself a failure and the curriculum both inside and outside the classroom at Mayfield has this as a key objective.

At Mayfield we aim to provide a curriculum to develop spiritual and independent learners with a love of learning and a sense of God being at the centre of all that we do. We understand that the curriculum, both within taught lessons and beyond them, should create an environment where questioning, reflection, risk-taking and the freedom to learn from mistakes are all encouraged. The curriculum is designed to ensure that all girls experience a broad and balanced education in these respects. The curriculum will not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs (*cross reference Life Skills Policy*). The curriculum is reviewed every year during the Spring Term and adjusted, as appropriate, to maximise the engagement, achievement and enjoyment of the girls. The curriculum is also reviewed to reflect new and revised curricular initiatives both within Mayfield and in line with ISI and Government expectations. An extensive range of extra-curricular activities is available to all girls.

The School operates a 30 period weekly timetable.

### Lower School - Years 7 and 8

The Lower School Curriculum is the start of the Mayfield Journey. It is designed to provide a natural transition into Middle School and ultimately Sixth Form. Our aim is to instil a love of learning by offering an engaging and inspiring curriculum, that equips the girls with the necessary skills to meet the needs of the age.

All girls in Years 7 – 8 follow a core programme of Religious Studies, English or International English (for girls with English as a second language), Mathematics, Science, PE, Personal Development (PD) and Computer Science. They also follow courses in Geography, History alongside a Creative Curriculum comprising Art, Ceramics, Drama, Food and Nutrition, Music and Textiles. The School offers three languages; Latin, French and Spanish from which girls choose two. The curriculum in Years 7 and 8 is designed to provide a broad academic experience. Girls will continue with many subjects that they have studied before, but they also have the opportunity of studying new things or studying familiar subjects in different ways and with a greater range of facilities and teaching methods.

As part of the Lower School Curriculum, the girls in Years 7 and 8 will undertake the Lower School Diploma. We believe that education of the whole person is more than what goes on within the classroom. In addition to a first class academic education, we want the girls to be aware of the importance of soft skills when developing personal attributes and qualities that will make them fully rounded individuals. The Mayfield Lower School Diploma gets the girls to make a formal record of their learning, both inside and outside the classroom. Weekly reflection under the guidance of their tutor will enable them to record the many different elements of school life, including those that can often go unnoticed. It will enable the girls to learn about themselves, about others in the wider community, through engagement in lessons, as well as through the extra-curricular programme, cross curricular days, school trips and days of recollection. The Diploma focuses on four key principles linked together by our overarching sense of Faith: Responsibility, Curiosity, Collaboration, Creativity & Innovation

Three hours each week are specifically dedicated to the Spiritual and Pastoral education of the girls in the form of Liturgies, Assemblies, Life Skills and time spent with Form Tutors.

### **Middle School – Years 9, 10 and 11**

As with girls in Years 7 and 8, girls in Year 9 follow a core programme of Religious Studies, English or International English (for girls with English as a second language), Mathematics, Science, PE, Personal Development (PD) and Computer Science. They also follow courses in Geography, History, alongside a Creative Curriculum comprising Art, Ceramics, Drama, Food and Nutrition and Music. Girls in Year 9 choose to study two subjects from: French, Latin, Spanish and Classical Civilisation. Providing choice at this stage enables us to continue offering breadth of curriculum in Year 9, whilst allowing more time to be devoted to each subject studied, thus ensuring a greater depth of experience.

All girls in Years 10 – 11 follow GCSE courses. Each girl studies a core programme of English Literature and English Language or International English (for girls with English as a second language), Mathematics, Religious Studies and a minimum of two Sciences. They will also attend non examined PE and Computer Science (which focuses on digital literacy skills as well as various aspects of Online Safety). In addition, girls will study three optional subjects, taking the total number of GCSEs studied to 9. The current optional subjects are Art, Biology, Ceramics, Chemistry, Classical Civilisation, Drama, Food Preparation and Nutrition, French, Geography, History, Latin, Music, Physical Education, Physics and Spanish. Studying Greek, German, Mandarin, Cantonese and Russian to GCSE is available through the extra-curricular programme. Girls in the Newton Maths group can also take the iGCSE Further Maths qualification.

Middle School students have three hours each week specifically dedicated to the Spiritual and Pastoral education of the girls in the form of Liturgies, Assemblies, Life Skills and time spent with Form Tutors.

Girls for whom English is a second language are expected, wherever possible to take a GCSE in their native language during their time in Middle School.

### **Sixth Form – Years 12 and 13**

Moving into the Sixth Form is a very significant step in any girl's personal approach to academic work. For the first time, students have an almost completely free choice of subjects. In timetabled lessons, teachers will increasingly be looking to students to take charge of their own studies. Teachers will help guide them through the course and will set assignments that will develop understanding. However, they will also expect students to take much more responsibility for their own learning, thus preparing them for independent work and study at university or in a career.

At A Level, breadth and depth continue to be the guiding principles with flexible courses designed from the wide range of subjects offered. Girls are expected to study three subjects in the Sixth Form with terminal assessment made at the end of Year 13. There is the option to take four A level choices, but this is generally only encouraged for the most able. The current curriculum offers A level courses in Art, Biology, Business Studies, Ceramics, Chemistry, Classical Civilisation, Drama and Theatre Studies, Economics, English, French, Geography, Greek, History, History of Art, Latin, Mathematics and Further Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Physics, Politics, Psychology, Religious Studies and Spanish. Sixth form students can also study a two year BTEC Level 3 Extended Certificate in Equine Management or a CTEC qualification in Media Studies. Studying Cantonese, German, Mandarin and Russian to A level is available through the extra-curricular programme.

Girls for whom English is a second language are encouraged, wherever possible, to take an A level in their native language during Year 12 or 13.

Alongside the Year 12 curriculum, a varied enrichment programme is offered. In line with the educational principles embedded in the founding mission of the School, we are keen to broaden the girls' interests and experiences, whilst extending their depth of intellectual enquiry beyond the confines of the exam specifications.

Sixth Form girls are also able to study for an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). This is a research project that encourages independent thinking and allows students to follow a passion or interest not covered in the A Level specification (cross reference Scholars and Gifted and Talented Provision Policy).

A strong pastoral curriculum continues to support learning and a Life Skills programme provides the appropriate personal and social development. Religious Education, in the form of 'Critical Religion' is compulsory for all girls in the Sixth Form, as is PE.

Actions not Words is the School's Voluntary Service programme. All Sixth Form girls are expected to take part in the Actions not Words programme during Year 12 and encouraged to continue this throughout their time in the Sixth Form. There are also opportunities for girls to be involved in service overseas, currently in Lourdes.

## Careers

We ensure that all girls have access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that is presented in an impartial manner, enabling them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options and helping to encourage them to fulfil their potential. An age-appropriate Careers programme is rolled out through the year groups. Visiting speakers, including a wide range of 'old girls' come to the school, share careers advice and experiences with current students. In addition, a Careers Fair, involving parents, Old Cornelians and friends of the school is held annually. Girls are expected to undertake some work experience during their senior years during the holidays. School will help and encourage girls, by drawing opportunities to their attention, but girls and their parents are expected to take responsibility for organising their own placements.

In helping our girls to select which subjects to study at GCSE and A level, we endeavour to recognise their potential aspirations with a view to progression into continuing education and/or employment after graduating from Mayfield. Within the framework of a broad and balanced education for each girl, we intend for our curriculum to allow a high level of personalisation so that every student can play to her strengths, develop specialisms, develop existing and new interests and achieve her personal best in all that she does (*cross reference Careers Education Policy*).

## English as a Second Language

The International English department of Mayfield School supports any girl from overseas whose first language is not English. Weekly timetabled lessons are given to girls in small groups. The School is an accredited examination centre. Girls can take any of the Cambridge suite of exams: the exams offered are B1 Preliminary for Schools, B2 First for Schools, C1 Advanced, C2 Proficiency and IELTS. In Year 10, girls either do B2 First for Schools followed by the Edexcel IGCSE in English as a Second Language in Year 11 or embark on a two-year Edexcel IGCSE course in English Language and English Literature. The latter mirrors the English GCSE curriculum but has been designed with overseas learners in mind and is offered with specialist language and skills support in small groups at Mayfield.

Sixth Form students, whose first language is not English are expected to take International English lessons in addition to their other subjects. Once they have achieved at least a Grade 6 (or higher) in GCSE or IGCSE English as a First Language, a Grade B (or higher) in C1 Advanced or an IELTS level 7.0 overall (minimum of 6.5 in each paper) they may opt to cease these lessons. (*Cross reference English as a Second or Other Language provision*).

## Use of ICT across the Curriculum

All girls will be expected to bring a laptop or tablet to lessons with the majority of subjects delivering all their curriculum electronically through Office 365, Microsoft Teams and/or One Note. They will use their devices to access and store resources electronically as well as completing and submitting work for evaluation and marking. The choice of laptop or tablet is a personal one, but we expect students to have a 2 in 1 laptop with a touchscreen,

stylus and keyboard. This gives versatility for typing long answers as well as annotating figures, drawing diagrams etc. Parents are given recommendations to help them purchase an appropriate laptop as part of the uniform booklet, see Annex A Computer Specification Information Sheet for Students.

Mayfield values good handwriting and believes that it is important to retain the skill of handwriting both for external GCSE and A level examinations, as well as later in life. Therefore all departments will ensure that some assignments are completed by hand to retain these skills. The number of handwritten assignments will vary by department but will be more common in subjects that require tasks such as the completion of calculations, drawing symbols and writing equations, annotating diagrams and drawing etc.

The Office 365 login and remote desktop app allows access to the School's curriculum areas wherever they are in the world.

Opportunities for the appropriate application of technology to enhance learning abound and the school is continuing to seek new ways in which technology can be used to genuinely enrich the learning experience.

## **Health and Safety in the Curriculum**

When working with tools, equipment and materials, in practical activities and in different environments, including those that are unfamiliar, girls are taught:

- about hazards, risks and risk control
- to recognise hazards, assess consequent risks and take steps to mitigate the risks to themselves and others
- to manage their environment to ensure the health and safety of themselves and others

## **Continued Professional Development for Staff**

Professional Development is vital for staff if they are to excel in their delivery of a highly effective curriculum for the girls. With this in mind, Heads of Department working with the Deputy Head Academic and in accordance with the School's Performance Review System, regularly review staff development needs. Inset is then targeted to address these needs both on an individual and whole-school basis so that teaching and learning across the school is of a consistently high standard.

## **Academic Integrity (cross reference with Academic Integrity Guide)**

We expect all girls to demonstrate the Cornelian principle of integrity, and as such we expect Mayfield students to strive to be authentic. If students are authentic, they are true to themselves, respectfully honest with those around them and they demonstrate strength of character. Mayfield School is committed to maintaining academic integrity as it forms the foundation of a fair and trustworthy educational system. It also ensures that students are evaluated fairly based on their own efforts, skills, and understanding of the material. In accordance with the school's ethos and values we wish to create an educational learning environment that encourages students to take personal responsibility for their education and have the opportunity to develop critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and a deeper understanding of the subject matter. In a world that increasingly values diversity, collaboration, and ethical decision-making, individuals with a strong academic foundation built on integrity are better equipped to contribute positively to society.

Academic integrity is key to being a successful student. Although Mayfield School embraces the progressive possibilities offered by Artificial Intelligence and other technological software for the education of our students it is our responsibility to teach pupils how to use it responsibly and to make our expectations around the production of academic work unequivocal. These expectations are outlined in our Academic Integrity Guide which draws on many of the regulations put in place by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) for public examinations and the production of non-examined assessment (NEA) (commonly known as coursework), as well as being applicable to younger students who are starting on their educational journey lower down the school.

## Annex A: Computer Specification Information Sheet for Students

As part of the Mayfield curriculum, we want girls to harness the benefits of embedded technology use within lessons. We, therefore, expect that all girls will bring a personal device (laptop or tablet) for use in school, both in class and for Study.

The choice of laptop or tablet is a personal one, but we expect girls to have a **2 in 1 laptop with a touchscreen, stylus and keyboard**. This gives versatility for typing long answers as well as annotating figures, drawing diagrams etc.

We are conscious that the market for IT equipment is large and more expensive does not necessarily mean better, especially if you are paying for unnecessary applications. Therefore, our IT Systems Department has put together a list of our recommendations for a device designed to last at least five years.

Requirement of your daughter's device:

- It must be a touch-enabled device with a compatible stylus to enable the digital handwriting of work.
- It must have a suitable operating system (we recommend Windows 11 or iOS). As a Microsoft school, we teach using Microsoft Office, OneNote and Teams. Chromebooks are not suitable for our application usage and Mac OS prevents the use of touchscreen functionality.
- A minimum of an i5 processor (or equivalent).
- A minimum of 8GB RAM.
- A minimum of 128GB hard drive. This should be plenty as we encourage and teach pupils to make good use of cloud-based storage.
- A physical keyboard: typing using an on-screen keyboard for any length of time is not effective. This could be built into the device, case or a separate Bluetooth keyboard.
- A minimum of 10.9 inches screen size. *(The larger the screen area the better – iPad minis are too small for all-day usage).*
- A good battery life.
- Camera *(rear-facing cameras make scanning/photographing handwritten work much easier).*
- For international students, please ensure the device is **set up in English** with an English keyboard set-up – otherwise, we are not able to offer IT support regarding the device.

Prior to starting make sure your daughter's laptop is set up with a user account, fully charged and that your daughter has access to the internet and an app store, so she can download necessary apps such as Teams and One Note.

In addition, you should ensure you have:

- An antivirus package (such as the 'Sophos home virus protection' which is free to download) loaded.
- A good protective sleeve or case.
- Headphones. *(Given Headphones are easily misplaced, we would urge pupils not to bring wireless Air Pods to school).*
- **Everything** identified with your daughter's name (laptop, stylus, keyboard, headphones, case, cable and charger). All laptop chargers look the same in a classroom! Fluorescent nail varnish is one way to mark property to help your daughter quickly identify her equipment.
- A copy of the serial number, make and model for any warranty or insurance claims. We are not able to insure any personal devices used at school, so recommend that you ensure your daughter's device is covered by a home contents insurance or device insurance policy.

The school does not currently recommend any particular device for use in school. However, many of our staff use the Acer Spin range of devices. Other commonly purchased devices include a Surface Pro or an iPad Pro. There are many retailers of all three devices, selling either new or reconditioned models.

Please see the links below for more information:

[Acer Spin Laptops](#)

[Windows Surface Pro](#)

[Apple iPad](#)

There is no need to purchase a separate Microsoft Office Licence. In September, once her School email account has been activated each girl will be given access to five free Microsoft Office Licences to download onto her devices. Using these, she will need to download Microsoft Teams and OneNote and other Office 365 apps and software.

