



NORTHAMPTON  
HIGH SCHOOL

GDST  
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

Reach Programme



# Welcome to our Reach Programme



Education at Northampton High goes beyond the classroom. In a challenging academic environment, we strive to create an atmosphere of curiosity, independence and risk taking where students can develop a breadth of knowledge well beyond the curriculum and an appreciation of cross-curricular discovery and cross-pollination of ideas.

Through the Reach Programme, our pupils find their own paths and discover what makes them tick as learners. The programme is rich and expansive, and it includes several pillars, from a wide range of clubs and societies where pupils of all ages are encouraged to develop new areas of interest and skill, to our scholarship programme where scholars have access to a rigorous package of stretch and support to ensure that they make the very best of their award and their whole academic experience at the school.

Also within Reach is the Enrichment and Electives programme, which spans the four-year journey of GCSE and A Level study.

It exists to push students' perception of and exposure to different subject disciplines. Our exciting weekly Reach lectures in the spring term seek to challenge, stimulate and broaden the horizons of all who attend and to encourage lively debate. The lecture programme is organised by Miss Anna Kilby, our Reach Coordinator, and is delivered by a range of external speakers, as well as drawing on the experience of current members of staff to engage students who are eager to stretch themselves academically. Our speakers enjoy sharing their varied experiences and wisdom by giving enriching and inspirational lectures which provide a fascinating insight into the world in which we live.

Through our Reach programme at Northampton High, students enhance their love of learning and leave us as young women, ready to play their part in the world, ready not only to grasp opportunities for themselves but also to create them for others.

**Dr May Lee**  
**Head**

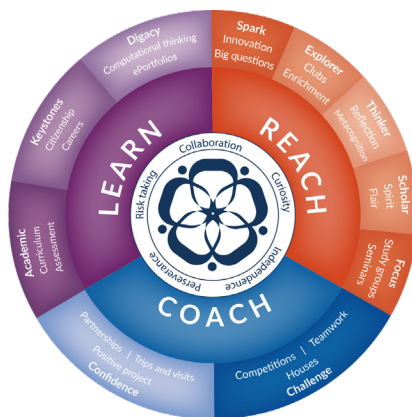
# The holistic approach wheel

In our school crest the rose represents the pupils, who are, naturally, at the heart of our educational approach. We recognise that school days are precious and fleeting, and our golden opportunity to shape the future. Our imperative is to get to know the children in front of us today and to help them achieve their ambitions for tomorrow. This means pupils have to understand themselves too and develop a positive academic self-image, as well as the ability to become life-long learners. We believe this comes through a 360-degree approach to teaching and learning, as reflected in the Northampton High Approach Wheel.

We have worked on shared language around the intellectual character dispositions, or mindsets, that we would like our pupils to develop over their time at the school. We have settled on five key areas to enable us to achieve our aims in learning and personal development and, logically, they also appear at the centre of the diagram, around the rose. It is perhaps worth looking a little more closely at these, as they are the result of many hours of research and discussion among colleagues and pupils.

**Collaboration** – we value shared experiences and trust those around us to support us in our learning.

**Curiosity** – we strive to expand the



limits of our learning and delight in the discovery of new ideas.

**Independence** – we take the initiative and trust our instincts; we do not accept artificial limits to our potential.

**Perseverance** – we keep trying when things go wrong and we celebrate the new learning this brings.

**Risk taking** – we challenge ourselves every day and we do not see perfection as the ultimate goal.

It is impossible to separate the purely academic aspects of school life from the wider cocurriculum and the pastoral threads that run through school. This is why the High School approach takes the form of a circle or wheel, with these aspects represented by the words Learn, Reach and Coach.

## Reach: Junior School

Opportunities to stretch and inspire our pupils begin in our Junior School. Pupils are encouraged to broaden their engagement with the humanities through engagement in national competitions.

Year 5 and 6 pupils can choose to participate in the Tycoon Enterprise Competition, a Key Stage 2 challenge that aims to develop the skills and understanding of young budding entrepreneurs; pupils submit proposals to receive start-up loans to establish a small business. They may also participate in the NATRE Spirited Arts competition, submitting a creative entry on thought-provoking themes such as 'We have far more in common with each other than that which divides us'.



Pupils in Year 6 can undertake a mini-EPQ (Extended Project) on a topic of their choice, developing vital skills in independent research and critical-thinking. They also participate in the GDST Junior Maths Conference, including a group of talented mathematicians selected to attend the prestigious event at the Maths Institute at the University of Oxford.

## Reach: Senior School



As well as the interdisciplinary elements of the Reach programme, some of which are described in the introduction, teachers in all faculties encourage pupils to extend their learning and interests through a huge range of opportunities for engagement far beyond the curriculum:



## Reach: Senior School



**Creative Arts:** A variety of experiences enables pupils throughout the school to enhance their artistic skills and develop their creativity and broaden their experience in the Creative Arts. 'Inktober' offers the challenge of improving their techniques in this medium, whilst talented artists, designers and crafters are selected and recognised in our annual Spring Collective Exhibition.

Pupils are able to develop and showcase their theatrical skills in various spheres, including LAMDA and participation in the National Theatre Connections programme, which culminates in a performance by pupils in Years 9/10 at the Royal and Derngate Theatre.

The inter-disciplinary nature of the Creative Arts underpins many activities; the annual whole-school musical combines students' performance skills in drama and music, whilst Textiles students are



encouraged to contribute to the costumes. Pupils' musical skills are further enhanced through engagement in grade examinations, recitals, including weekly performances in whole-school assembly, concerts, masterclasses, scholars' recitals and GDST Sing.

Pupils are encouraged to challenge themselves across all aspects of the Creative Arts through participation in a huge range of regional and national competitions, including the Rotary Chef competitions, the GDST Young Musician of the Year, Young Fashion Designers UK (Years 11 and 13) and the University of Northampton Art Schools Prize (Sixth Form).

All these opportunities build on the skills and understanding gained through the extensive programme of Creative Arts clubs, workshops, lectures and educational visits to exhibitions, concerts, food markets and theatrical productions.

# Reach: Senior School



**Science** - A broad programme of regular clubs, ranging from Engineering and Science Spirit to Zombie Apocalypse, ensures that students throughout the senior school can engage with many different aspects of science and technology. Educational activities beyond the school site enable students to extend their understanding of the countless developments and applications of the subject in the wider world, including the annual Year 10 'Women in STEM' Physics trip and the Year 11 Engineering experience. In the Sixth Form, students not only participate in the Royal Society Olympiads but also benefit from a regular STEM trip overseas, including recently to San Francisco.

**Humanities** - Pupils engage with a myriad of experiences outside the curriculum to deepen their understanding. Clubs offered throughout the senior school include Current Affairs and Eco Team, the latter of which empowers the pupils to take action to improve our environment and awareness of issues such as climate change.

**English** - There are many ways in which pupils throughout the senior school can engage with writing in a variety of spheres. The Sixth Form editorial team of the school magazine, Backchat, encourages pupils in all year groups to contribute articles on a plethora of subjects.

Beyond school, all pupils are urged to challenge themselves and extend their skills by participating in the GDST Creative Writing Competition and GDST Laurie Magnus Poetry Competition. Pupils also benefit from the opportunity to develop their skills in public speaking and to utilise them in a broader forum through engagement in national competitions: the GDST Chrystall Carter Public Speaking Competition (Year 11) and the ESU Schools' Mace Public Speaking and Debating Competition (Sixth Form).

The long-standing FemSock (Feminist Society) is open to Year 9 upwards, again empowering students to take action, such as raising awareness of period poverty.

Opportunities are also provided for students to try to solve key global issues through the Model United Nations club.

# Reach: Senior School



**Maths and Computing** - Pupils are encouraged to develop their mathematical and problem-solving skills through participation in national competitions.

For Years 7 and 8, these include the Junior Maths Challenge, Junior Team Challenge and BREBAS Computational Challenge, whilst pupils in Years 9-11 may enter the Intermediate Maths Challenge and Sixth Form students participate in the Maths Olympiad for Girls, the Senior Maths Challenge and the Senior Team Challenge.

Students are also able to broaden and deepen their mathematical experience beyond the school curriculum through a range of additional experiences, including the Open University Maths Masterclass (Year 9), the 'Maths is Everywhere' course of the Advanced Mathematics Support Programme (Years 10-11) and the Sixth Form Student Problem Solving Programme run by the GDST.

**Languages and Classics** - As well as engaging in the annual array of activities to celebrate the European Day of Languages, pupils have the opportunity to develop their language skills at a multilingual games club and to explore the foundations of Ancient Greek, in which they may choose to work towards a Level 1 award.

Key Stage 4 students can achieve the national Language Leaders award by mentoring and supporting younger girls in their learning. In addition to the Classical Art Competition within school, pupils are encouraged to challenge themselves in a broader sphere through national competitions that include the Ovid Myth Competition for Year 7 pupils and the GDST Languages Festival, as well as the international Euroclassica competition for Latin students in Year 11 and above.

Pupils are enabled to extend their understanding of the ancient world beyond the curriculum in a multitude of ways, such as Classical film nights, attendance at theatrical productions, online lectures/seminars and residential summer schools in Latin and Classical Civilisation.



## Reach: Senior School



**Sport** - A wide range of clubs enables pupils at all levels of the school to develop their skills in sports that include cricket, netball, hockey, fitness, running, football, rackets, swimming and gymnastics.

Pupils have the opportunity to compete regularly in GDST rallies across many sports, to participate in residential training camps, including overseas, and to work with a fitness instructor on personal fitness programmes designed to enhance individual performance.

In addition to competing at county and regional events, elite sportswomen may also be chosen to play for the GDST Select Hockey, Netball or Football teams, as well as participating in the GDST Sports Scholars Day.

A host of other opportunities exist for pupils to challenge themselves and extend their sporting talents, in areas as diverse as the GDST Virtual Dance Competition and Day of Dance, the LTA Tennis Schools Competition and equestrian events including Horse of the Year and other national events.

Assuming leadership roles, whether as sports captains or coaching younger pupils, enables students both to contribute to the wider school community and to develop their own sporting abilities in a broader sense.

# Scholarships

Scholarships - Northampton High Scholarships fall into 3 categories. Reach, Flair and Spirit. Scholarships recognise, reward and celebrate our pupils' characteristics, interests and aptitudes, whilst providing them with ongoing development opportunities to build on their talents, model behaviour and to represent the school in an ambassadorial manner.

The Reach Scholarship is in recognition of excellence in academic results in entry assessments, and also performance in the scholarship papers. The Flair Scholarship is in recognition of demonstrated talent, for example in sport, art, music, drama, dance, food, fashion textiles, and creative writing. The Spirit Scholarship is in recognition of characteristics prized by the school, such as involvement in the local community, volunteering for a charity or work for the environment.



Scholars receive an annual award, up to £500, to enhance their education and help them pursue their academic interests. For example, it might be connected to the subject the scholar wishes to read at university. Scholars have a dedicated mentor who guides them in their supra-curricular and extracurricular activities in order to provide academic and intellectual challenge beyond the normal curriculum.

These might include; masterclasses, summer schools, academic competitions, essay prizes, scholars' concerts and other enrichment and extension activities. They take part in an annual scholars celebration and presentation event involving discussions or lectures on pupil-led topics, which encourage self and group reflection and critical thinking.





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