

'The Wheel'

A holistic approach of education at Northampton High School

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.

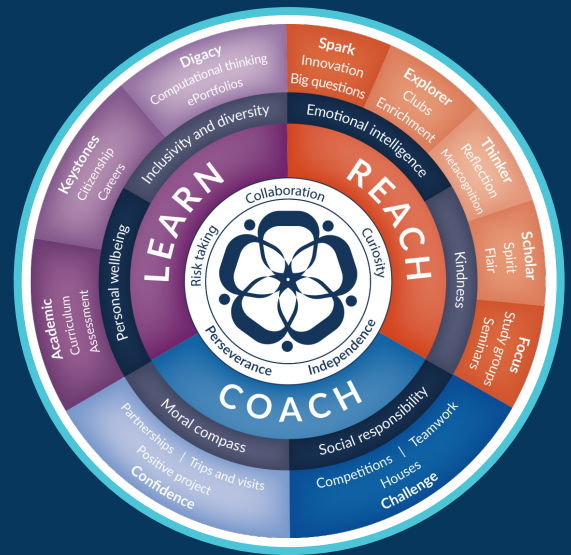
Independence – we take the initiative and trust our instincts; we do not accept artificial limits to our potential.

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. They form a unity; without one part the others would be incomplete and the rounded education we seek to provide would be compromised. Of course, there is no attempt to itemise the whole programme at Northampton High. Instead, the labels in each section aim to give a flavour of the many areas of focus.

The Learn banner represents the curricular programme, including class and subject academic study across the school, and public examinations and other assessments. Individual 360-degree learning profiles are developed for every student as they move up the school and, of course, dedicated support for different learning styles



and needs are on offer from our Learning Enhancement Coordinator and the school's pupil-focused Examinations Officer. Keystones are vital nonexamined elements such as social and health education, alongside careers and financial awareness training. Under the subheading Digacy, we look at key tech skills as well as the '360-degree me' eportfolios that each pupil builds up over the senior school years.

By Reach, we refer to the expansive and diverse cocurricular programme of activities to support, stretch and inspire pupils throughout the school. Clubs and societies under the subheadings of Spark, Explorer and Thinker scatter their paths with opportunities to satiate their curiosity and expand their horizons, or inspire them in various ecological, scientific, sporting and artistic areas. Many clubs run across the junior and senior school years, allowing older pupils to enjoy time in the company of younger ones at lunchtimes.



The Enrichment programme in Years 10-13 also contributes, with a huge range of courses, from politics and international relations to computing, from dance to yoga. Our Scholar programme gives pupils with specific skills and talents the opportunity to shine. The Focus subheading caters for the needs of groups of students, such as those taking public examinations, or with specific university requirements, such as for medicine and engineering.

Coach stands for Confidence and Challenge. We strive to foster a safe and supportive environment for our pupils, however, it would be a mistake to assume that school life comes without its anxieties. Indeed, helping young people to navigate their complex daily interactions is a priority for all schools. Growing up is not always easy and we are experts in supporting girls to develop close and rewarding friendships, where problems are not ignored, but resolved through caring and sympathetic systems, such as the Girls on Board and Positive programmes.

Developing pupils' knowledge of themselves and how they come across in communal situations is enhanced by our comprehensive trips and visits programme. The school House system builds community spirit and allows older pupils to develop their leadership skills.

Volunteering and philanthropy, too, are hugely important as pupils continue their pathways through the school. These take on a new imperative in Sixth Form, where pupils gain one or more of the Northampton Laureates that reflect the distinct contributions students make over their time at the school.

The final element of the holistic wheel are personal development aspirations, running through all areas of Learn, Reach and Coach. There is a focus here on diversity and inclusivity, as represented by our Undivided programme and concepts of moral compass and social responsibility. Here, pupils are asked to set themselves high standards of decency and behaviour, not only in their interactions in school with fellow pupils, staff and guests, but also at home and online.

We help them to understand their own welfare and safety needs and support them when needed via our dedicated wellbeing team in school, including our family liaison officer and the school nurse. Emotional intelligence and a renowned High School trait, kindness, complete this circle, as we help pupils to live their lives with the needs of others at the forefront of their minds. As compassionate, reflective and impactful members of society.

*Henry Rickman
Deputy Head Academic*



To view our holistic approach wheel in more detail, please scan here

