



**BEDFORD
GIRLS'
SCHOOL**

Co-curriculum Policy

Reviewed: August 2023

Next Review: August 2024

Reviewed by: Assistant Head – Co-curricular

The co-curriculum is an integral part of the education that Bedford Girls' School offers. A strong co-curriculum develops leadership, self-esteem, time-management skills and teamwork as well as building friendships, enriching knowledge and tapping into unknown potential. There is much evidence to suggest that participation in activities that complement the curriculum play a central role in students' healthy development and help to enhance global citizenship as well as general educational success.

The co-curricular programme is built upon the objectives and values of the school. It is centred around four themes:

- ❖ Engage and Enquire,
- ❖ Global Citizenship,
- ❖ Wellbeing and Team work,
- ❖ Art and Creativity

Developing and strengthening in students the ten IB Learner Profile Attributes are central in the delivery of each co-curricular club. All members of staff are expected to contribute to the co-curricular programme and all students are expected to take part. At Bedford Girls' School we provide opportunities for every student to develop their potential to the full, creating confident, independent, versatile and resilient adults, equipped with attributes and values to meet the challenges of a changing society and to provide the best possible educational foundation for life. We want to inspire every student to have the confidence to make a difference to the world she will be moving into.

- Every member of staff is expected to publicise and assist in the organization and delivery of at least one co-curricular activity.
- All girls from Years 3 – 9 are expected to take part in a minimum of two co-curricular activities, either during the lunchtime or afterschool.
- All girls in Years 10 – 11 are expected to take part in a minimum of one co-curricular activity.
- Sixth form students are encouraged to run their own clubs (with associated members of staff to oversee them,) for their peers and younger students
- All girls in Years 12 -13 are expected to be involved in charity and service opportunities throughout the Sixth Form.
- All activities will be monitored and evaluated by the Assistant Head –Co-curricular to ensure that a broad and diverse programme is delivered

The Co-curricular programme will be agreed each Summer Term for the following academic year and published for students and parents.

The House system

The House System plays an important role in the co-curriculum, delivering a number of whole school or year group co-curricular activities.

The purpose of the House structure is to give girls a sense of belonging when they join BGS and build upon the sense of community, as well as giving a number of positive role models within a vertical system. The Houses have strong identities, values and characteristics which are in line with those of the whole school enabling the students to form strong personal values. The objective is to give the students in each House and those who take positions of responsibility within each House the following opportunities:-

Bold

Imaginative

Reflective

- Sense of belonging
- Positive role models from within their vertical peer group
- A sense of achievement outside the classroom
- Fun and excitement through competition
- Curiosity and creativity
- Leadership
- Individual and collective responsibility
- Confidence to be *Bold*, take action and develop a spirit of adventure
- Develop communication skills, flexibility and resilience.
- Give students a stronger voice in decision-making across the school.

The Programme for the year is agreed with the Heads of House and the Assistant Head Co-curricular and is publicised during House assemblies each fortnight. All students and staff are allocated to a House on entry to BGS and are expected to play an active part in the programme of events throughout the year. There is a mix of competitions, challenges and activities that appeal to all interests.

There are six Houses named after historical, iconic women and each House is associated with a colour. A member of staff has the role of Head of House who works closely with the House Captain and her three House Prefects who are taken from Year 12/13. There are also House Captains in Year 6 taken from the Junior School Head Girls' Team as well as a House Representative for each of the year groups from Years 7-10.

Charity, Action and Service

The Bedford Girls' School ethos: "We value and celebrate every member of our community as a unique individual and recognise our responsibility to the world around us. We remain continually curious about the perspectives of others. We lift each other up with nurture and challenge."

The school's charity and service programmes mirror the BGS ethos and is guided by the CAS & Service Coordinator, under the direction of the Assistant Head Co-curricular.

Each year a Service Captain and a team of three prefects is selected via the Girls' Leadership Group application process. These students meet regularly with the CAS & Service Coordinator, in order to plan events across both the junior and senior school. They may also liaise with their counterparts at Bedford School for joint activities, and sometimes with Heads of Year for events pertaining to a particular year group.

Purpose of Charity and service-based activities in school

Charity and service-based activities in school serve a number of purposes:

- To encourage students to look beyond their own day-to-day lives
- To engender a sense of citizenship, at the school, local and global levels
- To build individual engagement and social responsibility within the framework of the school's charities focus
- To raise awareness of our charities and their objectives amongst the student and staff body
- To raise funds for our chosen charities
- To bring a sense of common purpose, and help build a strong school ethos and community.

Charity and Service projects and events

The school conducts a range of short and longer term projects across different year groups (in both the Junior and Senior Schools). These projects and activities seek to nurture an altruistic spirit in our students, while enabling them to develop their practical and advocacy skills. Such projects may involve:

- fundraising for the school charities
- raising awareness of areas of particular interest/concern to our students
- practical involvement in outreach to our local community

The school charities:

The school commits to focusing on one local and one global charity at a time, with a vision to take on the commitment for a minimum period of five years. This enables deepening relationships to be built between the school and the charities, as well as encouraging a longer-term awareness of the charities amongst the staff and students. Charities are selected using a number of criteria in accordance with the school mission: “to empower our students with the attributes and self-confidence to seize opportunities and tackle the challenges of a complex world.”

Our chosen charities will:

- Address issues which are of interest/concern to a wide range of students of different age groups
- Share our values of being bold, imaginative, and reflective
- Share our desire to treat everyone with fairness, regardless of their personal characteristics in accordance with our Diversity Pledge
- Share our desire to protect the world around us in accordance with our Sustainability Pledge
- Not be politically aligned

A developing charities and service programme

Bedford Girls’ School carries out a developing charities and service programme progressing from action to advocacy through to leadership, with the aims stated above.

- In the Junior School, the charities and service programme is fully integrated in the IB Primary Years Programme. A spirit of international mindedness is paramount, and there is a strong emphasis on our global charity. The notion of personal agency as a natural response to learning about the world is key, which leads to a number of small-scale, highly focused charity responses throughout the Junior School.
- In Year 7 and 8, where students get involved with our single local charity, learning about the charity itself and developing their organisational skills through carrying out a number of fund-raising events.
- In Year 9, the focus broadens to our school global charity, with a series of fact-finding and fund-raising activities.
- In Key Stage 4, students develop their awareness of social issues and hone their advocacy skills through the Giving Forward project, where they select a local charity in line with their own interests and areas of concern, and promote it through a presentation. The best presentation wins a substantial grant for their chosen charity.
- In the Sixth Form, the Campaign Challenge encourages students to promote wider social issues of their choice, while students are also able to engage practically in outreach to our local community by participating in a 1:1 paired reading/numeracy support with pupils in primary schools or helping to host a lunch club for elderly residents in the local area.

Charity and Service Protocol

On occasions BGS supports national events. Individual students sometimes ask to run a fund-raising activity in school for a particular charity that they are involved with, which is not one of the school’s chosen charities at the time. It is not possible to accommodate such requests, as the school has a commitment to focus on its chosen charities. The school is happy to highlight individual students’ own charity events in or out of school on our social media platforms.