

Year 8 Curriculum Guide



At Downsend we are proud of the broad curriculum that we offer in Key Stage 3 and the opportunities that these subjects provide for your child to both develop their Future Skills, and lead to academic success in the future. Year 8 marks an important year as we move towards GCSE choices in the Spring Term and provides your child with the chance to engage with all of their subjects in a way that will help them decide which subjects they wish to explore in greater detail over the three-year GCSE course. For some subjects, therefore, this will represent the last year that your child has the chance to study them formally as part of their curriculum, and we therefore encourage all of the pupils to engage as fully as possible in all of their subjects.

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Year 8 Timetable

Our timetable operates on a two-week cycle, with each week known as Week A and Week B. A chart which shows which timetable week corresponds with each calendar week is available on Cognia Connect.

There are 6 periods each day, with each period lasting 60 minutes. The structure of the day is as follows:

8.30am Registration, Form Time activities or Assembly

9.00am Period One

10.00am Period Two

11.00am Morning Break

11.20am Period Three

12.20pm Period Four

1.20pm Lunch

2.20pm Period Five

3.20pm Period Six

4.20pm Dismissal or Extra-curricular activities

In Year 8, the curriculum is divided across subjects as shown here:

Subject	Lessons per fortnight
English	8
Maths	8
Science	9
Geography	3
History	3
Religious Studies	3
French	4
German or Spanish	4
Art	2
Design Technology (including DT, Food Technology and Textiles)	2
Computing	2
Drama	2
Music	2
Games	5
PE	1
PSHE	1
Stretch (Curriculum Enrichment)	1

INDEPENDENT LEARNING



As a school, we believe that the core purpose of homework is to help students make progress in their learning, whether that be in their knowledge, skills, understanding or in their own personal growth. Teachers will set homework for a variety of reasons that might include preparation for lessons to come, consolidation and practice of lessons that students have had, to stretch and challenge or to broaden personal development. As a school, we do not believe in setting homework for the sake of it.

We recognize that many of our students have extensive extra-curricular commitments outside school. We value family life.

What can you expect to see?

- Homework will be relevant and a clear task set.
- Guidance on how long to spend on each homework and a clear deadline.
- This information will be available on Firefly.
- A wide variety of homework tasks, such as the completion of exercises, revision, independent research, longer term projects or the practice of skills in practical activities.
- Some tasks will relate directly to exam style questions; others will aim to take your child beyond the syllabus. Some will be written; some will involve the use of computer. Tasks may be creative or simply involve reading or thinking about a subject. Work may have to be completed individually or in groups.

Things to be aware of

- Not all homework will be marked formally by a teacher, but all will be assessed. Sometimes this assessment will be written, sometimes verbal, sometimes peer and self-assessed. Some homework tasks will be given a mark or grade, some may have formative comments. Some feedback may require your son/daughter to revisit their work in order to learn from it and improve.
- Teachers will set a homework task appropriate to the subject, the group and individuals within it. Therefore, your child may not have the same task as another in the same subject or even in the same class.

- Sometimes, tasks may be challenging. This could be intentional but should never cause worry. If this is the case, encourage your child to talk to their teacher to let them know that they are finding the task difficult.
- If your son/daughter is taking a long time on their homework (greater than 125% of the allocated time), please encourage them to stop. Please write a short note to advise the subject teacher of this.

What can I do to help?

- Take an interest in your son/daughter's work but allow them to complete it by themselves.
- Find your son/daughter a space to work – but this may not have to be on their own in their bedroom. Some students will feel happier working in the kitchen or sprawled out on the living room floor. Sometimes (for example when doing revision) you may have to help with ensuring a quiet environment, whilst on other occasions a family discussion could be more effective.
- We do not expect parents to be subject experts, and therefore if you have any specific subject queries with regards to homework, please contact the subject teacher or Head of Department.
- If you have any general concerns about Independent Learning for your son/daughter, please contact their tutor or Head of Year.

Useful Platforms

<https://hegartymaths.com/>

<https://www.century.tech/>

<https://senecalearning.com/en-GB/>

<https://pearsonactivelearn.com/>

<https://uk.language-gym.com/>

<https://conjuguemos.com/>

Independent Learning Expectations:

- Pupils should read for 15 minutes per day.
- English spellings will be set weekly.
- French and German or Spanish learning will also be set weekly.

Revision Strategy 1: Self Quizzing

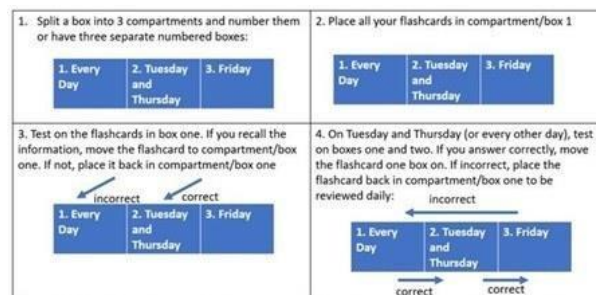
Step one: students read the key information (e.g. their notes on power in Macbeth)

Step two: students conceal the information.

Step three: students write down everything they can remember.

Step four: students look back over the key information to see how well they remembered it. This is the most important stage as it is where they evaluate their learning. They should use a different colour pen to fill in any gaps which become their focus for the next revision session.

This self-quizzing process can be done in pairs with students questioning each other or with you questioning them.



Revision strategy 2: The Leitner Method (Flashcards)

The Leitner Method is a way of quizzing with flashcards where students move the cards to different compartments depending on whether or not they recalled the information correctly.

You can use this method with key vocabulary, key characters, key themes, key quotes or any factual knowledge.

Revision Strategy 3: Brain Dumps

A brain dump or knowledge splat is a very simple revision strategy involving 'dumping' or 'splatting' everything your child knows about a topic onto a blank piece of paper.

Step one: students choose what they want to revise (e.g. the character of Lady Macbeth) Step

two: students write down everything they can remember on this topic.

Step three: students over lesson material to see how well they remembered the chosen topic and check any errors. This is the most important stage as it is where they evaluate their learning. They should use a different colour pen to fill in any gaps or make corrections which become their focus for the next revision session.

Revision Strategy 4: Mind Maps

- A mind map is a way of summarizing information that you have learnt.
- It shows how the information is connected to the main topic.
- It can use words and pictures so supports those who learn better with pictures.
- The idea of a mind map is that you can use it as a prompt from which you can talk or write about that topic in much more detail.

From your main notes, highlight the key points, but you can only highlight three words at a time.

Put your page landscape (sideways) and put the main topic heading in the middle.

Organise your sub-topics as branches around the main topic. (You can always use the branches to show how the sub-topic links to main topic.)

From the sub-topics create smaller branches that highlight the key points that you need to remember. These can be words or pictures.



Top Tips for effective revision

Support your child by encouraging them to:

- Spend a maximum of 20 minutes on any topic in one go.
- Be ACTIVE in their revision.
- Remind them that reading their notes alone will not work!

- Work in a quiet environment with limited distractions.
- Remove electronic temptations – have an agreed amnesty. And reward successful demonstration of the outcome of the revision in the way that is appropriate for your child.



Understanding what your child's grade means

Your child will be assessed in each subject each term against their progress towards the end of year objectives for their year group.

ARE relates to the expected achievement of a pupil of average ability based against Downsend expectations.

These objectives are known as "Performance Indicators" and are published and available for parents to refer to.

Each of these grades represents a band of achievement, and therefore we also use + and – to indicate where your child sits within the band.

It is therefore possible for a child to progress within a single band from one term to the next and still be making good progress.

	End of Autumn Term	End of Spring Term	End of Summer Term
Mastering			
Exceeding			
Meeting			ARE
Approaching		ARE	
Developing	ARE		
Beginning			

How does the end of year attainment relate to future potential?

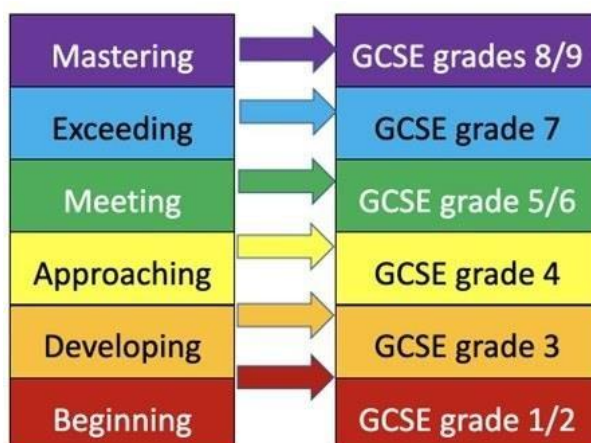
The grade that your child achieves at the end of the year correlates to the progress we would expect of a pupil of their age who goes on to achieve the corresponding GCSE grade at the end of Year 11.

For example,

A pupil who achieves Meeting at the end of year 7 or 8 is on the right track to achieve a grade 5 or 6 at GCSE in that subject.

A pupil who achieves Exceeding at the end of year 7 or 8 is on the right track to achieve a grade 7 at GCSE in that subject.

This does not mean that their current progress precludes higher achievement in the future, simply that they would need to achieve faster progress in the intervening years.



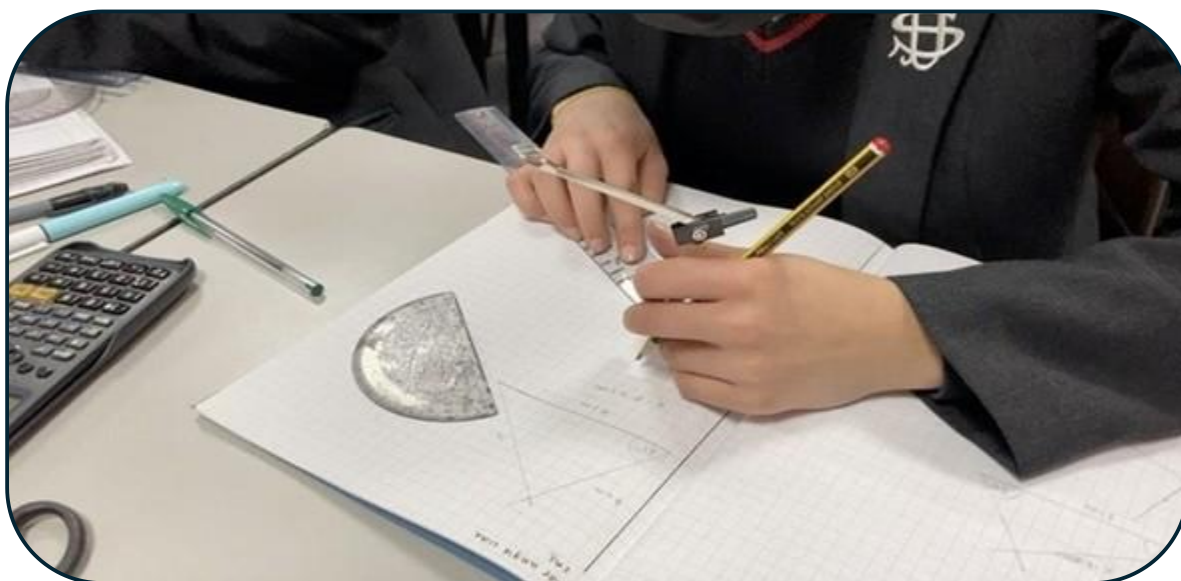
Next steps

As part of your child's written report, they will receive next steps targets from each of their teachers.

These next steps relate to specific areas for development for your child, which, if successfully accomplished, will support your child in progressing to the next grade level.

We encourage parents to discuss these next steps targets with their child and support them from home in achieving these targets.

MATHS



What will your child be learning?

Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Ratio and Proportion Multiplying and Dividing Fractions Algebraic Graphs	Brackets and Equations Sequences Index Laws Fractions, decimals, and Percentages Standard Form	Angles Area and Perimeter The data handling cycle

What will your child be learning?

At key stage 3 we follow the Pearson Math's Progress scheme of work.

Through the year, they will be building skills in: use of a calculator recommended [calculator](#)

What learning will your child need to do beyond the classroom?

Homework will be set once a week, this will mainly be using Sparx math's and Mathswatch. If your child's teacher feels consolidation of a topic is required or recap of skills is needed homework may be set up to twice a week.

How can you support your child's learning?

Ensuring they complete Sparx math's/Mathswatch assignments by watching the video and writing out workings before attempting answers, to become independent.

It is essential that your child comes fully equipped to each math's lesson having a pen, pencil, ruler, scientific calculator, [geometry set](#) and computer stylus.

Sparx and Mathswatch is always open and your child can complete any tasks related to the topic.

Students can complete a 1 minute math's on Mathswatch as a revision tool.

How will they be assessed?

Students will have regular low stakes quizzing on general math's skills

Students will complete a unit test after each topic to show understanding. This will be preceded by a period of revision

Formal assessments will take place once a term. This will be on content covered to date and Mathswatch revision lists will be provided.

Finally, students will be taught in ability sets and teachers will have a wide range of differentiation available to them through Support, Core and Depth content.

How can they develop their learning beyond the formal curriculum?

Talk to your child about math's in a positive manner

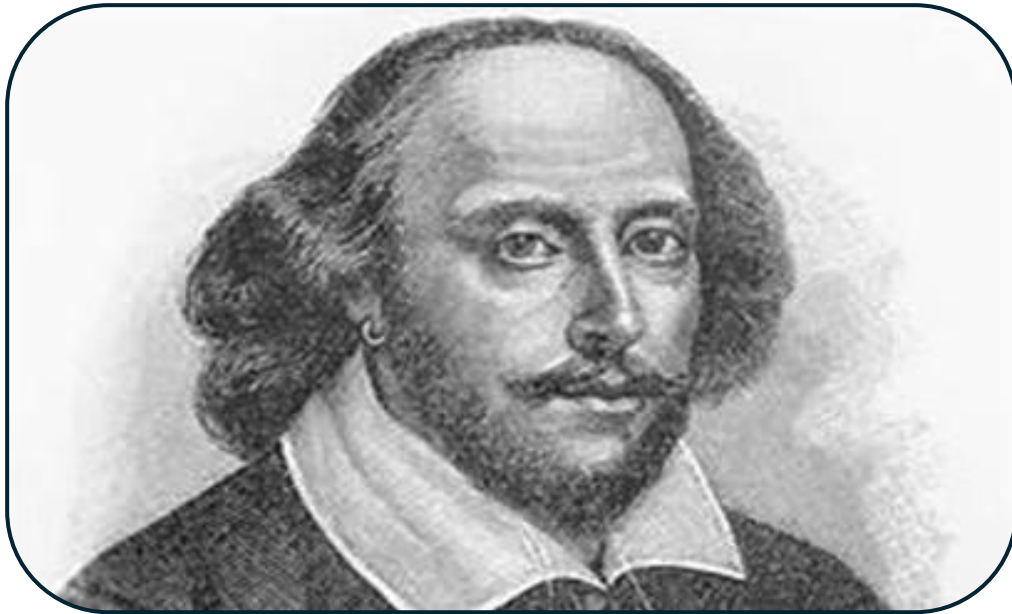
Discuss different methods of tackling a math's problem.

Complete as much Mathswatch as possible.

Take part in the UKMT challenges

Complete math's puzzles such as sudoku or logic puzzles.

ENGLISH



What will your child be learning?

Autumn Term

From Beowulf to Dickens: English Literature Through the Ages

Spring Term

Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare

Summer Term

Diverse Modern Poetry and the Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

Through the year, students will build skills in literacy by engaging with a variety of written texts. As they learn, they will also engage with descriptive and persuasive writing tasks that will eventually form the basis of their English Language GCSE. Students will be expected to present their learning in a range of written formats including extended essays, comprehension, descriptive writing and articles. Their learning will also be accompanied by a strong focus on spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) in all lessons. During the year, they will continue to improve their digital literacy, using their devices for research and to create presentations of their learning. Students will be expected to improve their collaboration skills through group work activities and to develop their skills in oracy through presentation work and discussion. The curriculum will provide students with the chance to think critically about writers' choices through considering the questions: What is the writer doing? How is the writer doing it? Why is the writer doing it?

What learning will your child need to do beyond the classroom?

Students will be set relevant homework tasks by their teacher on Firefly once a week. These will take a variety of formats, as appropriate, throughout the year. Examples of English homework will include revision to prepare for assessments; weekly spellings; research on a particular character, theme, or contextual aspect; and curriculum related projects to extend and enrich learning outside the classroom. Keeping their revision notes (mind maps, bullet point lists, diagrams etc.) up to date will help prepare for end of topic and summer examinations. Through engaging with the Accelerated Reader program, students must read for a minimum of twenty minutes per evening and quiz immediately upon completion of the current book.

How can you support your child's learning?

The most fundamental way that you can support your child with English and literacy is by encouraging them to read. Many children become reluctant readers at this age, particularly with growing distractions, such as gaming, becoming increasingly prevalent. It is extremely important that at least twenty minutes is given to reading each day for both fiction and nonfiction texts. Beyond reading, please remember to engage your child in conversation about what they have been doing in school. Explaining it back to you helps them to process and cement their learning. Supporting with revision by asking them questions and encouraging a quiet space, free from distractions, to engage in purposeful revision is extremely important. Students will be supported with appropriate revision strategies by their teacher, so please ask your child about the strategies they have been shown. All homework set will be visible on the parent portal of Firefly to keep you aware of what is being set and allow you to monitor its completion at home. Please contact your child's teacher if you have any questions and they will be happy to assist. Revision support materials will be provided by the English team when they are required.

How will they be assessed?

Students will receive three in-class assessments per term. Two of these will be written assessments (either analysis of set texts or descriptive/persuasive writing tasks) and one will be on SPaG. Each assessment will cover a different skill and pupils will be told at least one week in advance about the assessment, so that they can prepare. Homework in the week leading up to the assessment will consist of guided revision tasks.

How can they develop their learning beyond the formal curriculum?

Reading, as already stated, is essential. Take your child to the local library or bookshop and encourage them to find books that interest them – these will not necessarily be what you expect them to be reading! Please also encourage them to read newspapers, journals and other nonfiction texts; many high quality texts can be found online, particularly on BBC Bitesize and the British Library Learning website. Trips to the theatre will also help your children to understand the fundamentals of production and performance.

Students who enjoy and do well in English are often those who are interested in history, culture and the world around them. This develops their vocabulary and helps them to place the texts that we read within their contexts. Trips to museums, heritage sites, art galleries and famous landmarks will all help to spark their interest, imagination and knowledge of the world

SCIENCE



In Year 8, students deepen their scientific knowledge and begin making broader connections across biology, chemistry and physics. Our focus is on curiosity, real-world application, and developing the confidence to think critically and creatively.

What Will Your Child Be Learning?

This year's topics stretch from the microscopic to the cosmic—pushing students to think on a larger scale and engage with some of the biggest questions in science.

Autumn Term

Biology (B4): Ecology – Explore how living things interact with each other and the planet.

Chemistry (C4): Materials and Earth – Learn about Earth's resources, sustainability, and materials science.

Physics (P4): Electricity and Magnetism - Explore the world of circuits and how magnetism and electricity are related.

Spring Term

Biology (B5): Human Body Systems – Investigate how the human body works at a deeper level.

Chemistry (C5): Chemical Reactions 2 – Explore how and why substances react—and which ones react fastest.

Physics (P5): Light and Space – Discover how light behaves and journey through our universe.

Summer Term

Biology (B6): Plant Biology – Dive into how plants grow, adapt and support ecosystems.

Chemistry (C6): Energetics and Rates – Learn how energy is transferred in reactions and how we control them.

Physics (P6): Motion – Apply forces in context and explore real-world applications.

Revision & Resources

All key resources, feedback tools, and stretch tasks can be found on our Science website:

[Downsend Science Website](#)

Supporting Your Child's Science Journey

You can make a real impact by:

- Ensuring weekly homework (via ClassCharts) is completed on time.
- Encouraging use of the science website, revision lists, and feedback tools.
- Making sure your child is equipped with: calculator, ruler, stylus, and computer access.
- Supporting regular use of online platforms like Seneca, Learning by Questions, and OneNote tasks.

Assessment & Feedback

- Students complete Waypoint Tasks at the end of each module to identify and fill knowledge gaps.
- Major summative assessments take place in February and June, assessing all taught content.

Science Beyond the Classroom

At Downsend, science doesn't stop at the lab door. Encourage your child to:

- Join our science clubs and stretch activities.
- Ask questions and explore "what if" scenarios at home.
- Watch science documentaries on Netflix, iPlayer, Disney+ or YouTube.
- Read popular science magazines like *New Scientist* or *BBC Focus*.
- Stay informed with science news apps or websites.
- Visit London's world-class science museums, from the Science Museum to the Crick Institute.
- Debate, discuss, and challenge ideas—talk science at home.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION



Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Boys Games: Football	Boys Games: Rugby	Boys Games: Cricket
Girls Games: Hockey	Girls Games: Netball	Girls Games: Cricket
PE: Health Related Fitness	PE: Badminton	PE: Athletics

What will your child be learning?

Through the year, they will be building skills in:

Individual skill development

Spatial awareness

Problem solving

Communication

Team work

What learning will your child need to do beyond the classroom?

Taking part in after school sports practices and clubs.

How can you support your child's learning?

You can help by encouraging your child to take part in school sport both in curriculum time and through our extensive sports provision before/after school.

To assist further in your child's development, there are a number of opportunities at external sports clubs, 1 to 1 tuition as well as utilizing the extensive 'how to' videos on YouTube.

How will they be assessed?

Students will receive weekly assessments in our major Games which can be seen through team selection on Schools Sports (SOCS). Students will also receive three in-class PE assessments per year towards the end of each topic studied. Each assessment will cover a number different sport specific skills and students will need to use these skills in competition.

How can they develop their learning beyond the formal curriculum?

Students can further their understanding of sport by taking part in club sport outside of school.

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY / TEXTILES / MATERIALS / GRAPHICS / FOOD & NUTRITION)



What will your child be learning?

Students over the course of the year will rotate between two subjects: Resistant Materials and Food & Nutrition

Subject 1: Food & Nutrition	Subject 2: Design & Resistant Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability- food for the future • Batch cooking • Minimal waste- clever cooking • Planning meals- venue/occasion • Function of relevant ingredients • Evaluating out comes • Recipes: 4 recipes from one chicken/making stock/spag bolognaise/chilli <p>Science: freezing and storing of food; how bacteria generates/control measures</p>	<p>Students will work in small teams, collaborating to build and develop a 'Marble Run'</p> <p>They will explore technical principles and manipulating of materials, exploring the use of a variety of different mechanisms and solutions. They will learn how to use specific manipulation techniques using timbers and plastics. Students will be required to demonstrate safe working conduct in the workshop and an ability to plan and organise.</p> <p>End products will be tested and critiqued against the objectives and criteria, with students evaluating and analysing the success of their model.</p>
Autumn/Spring Subject 1 or 2	Spring/Summer: Subject rotation 1 or 2

Through the year, they will be building skills in:

- Problem solving
- Collaboration
- Creativity and individuality
- Digital skills: Cad/Cam
- Each project will have a focus on Key terminology focusing on specific literacy terms
- Specific skills using a variety of tools. Equipment and machinery

- Each topic will have a specific focus task on Math's/Science relative to the topic; for food and nutrition, students will be making their own Starch.
- Develop the creative, technical, and practical expertise needed to perform everyday tasks confidently and to participate successfully in an increasingly technological world
- Build and apply a repertoire of knowledge, understanding and skills to design and make high-quality prototypes and products for a wide range of users
- Critique, evaluate and test their ideas and products and the work of others
- Understand and apply the principles of nutrition and learn how to cook

What learning will your child need to do beyond the classroom?

There will be three homework tasks for each rotation and subject. Which will be an extension and informative to what will be completed in class. Time management and planning plenty of time to do these tasks are part of the learning.

Where possible, practice, independently, the skills and techniques taught in class. Whether that is making a meal, practicing a technique or re visiting a drawing skill or process.

How will they be assessed?

Students will have a workbook to support the course, within which they will receive feedback and guidance.

Students at the end of each term will complete a Baseline Assessment, that will test their learning from that specific topic. As they move onto the second and third topic, their Baseline Assessments will include questions to test them from prior learning in previous topics, for example:

Autumn Topic: F&N	Spring Topic: F&N and DT	Summer Topic: DT & FN
Assessment 50-mark questions on F&N Total 50 marks	Assessment 50-mark questions on DT 5 Mark questions on F& N Total 55 marks	Assessment 50-mark questions on DT 10 Mark questions on F&N Total 60 marks

How can they develop their learning beyond the formal curriculum?

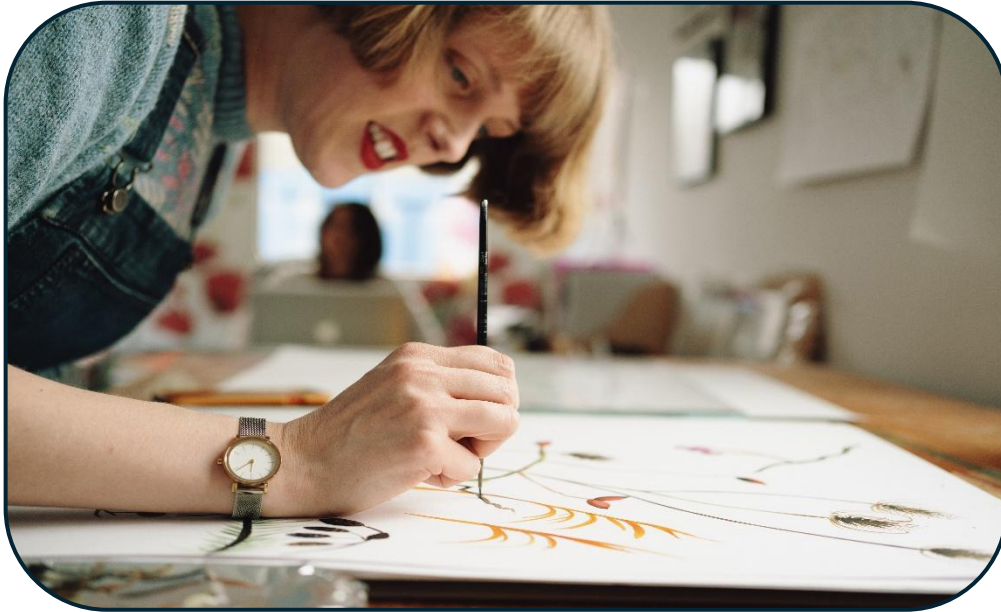
We would always encourage any independent learning, there are many ways in which you can do that.

- Reading; cookbooks/design subscriptions/bibliographies of designers and artist, chefs.
- Visit Galleries/Craft fairs and Exhibitions, Food fayre.
- Watch relevant Tv programmes: How it is Made/ Giant Engineering/Cookery shows
- Keep an independent 'ideas' diary, complete sketches notes/thoughts.
- Enter competitions.
- Fix and mend things (from sewing socks to fixing broken furniture; avoid electrical items!) doing this builds problem solving skills and teaches students to utilize

TV & Reading:

- How to Draw cool stuff by Catherine Holmes <https://g.co/kgs/aQpVFS>
- KS3 Design & Technology Study Guide: superb for catching up at home (CGP KS3 D&T)
- Exploring Food and Nutrition for Key Stage 3- Yvonne Mackey, Bev Saunder
- <https://www.bbc.com/future/bespoke/follow-the-food/>- BBC Documentaries exploring lifestyle, farming, food as medicine, climate change etc.
- <https://www.technologyforfun.co.uk/> - this provides some fun independent projects students can explore.
- Explore Pinterest!
- How It is Made - is a Canadian documentary television series that explores engineering and manufacturing of a variety of different products and materials

ART & DESIGN



What will your child be learning?

AUTUMN	SPRING	SUMMER
<p>Still Life: Over the Autumn term students will be learning a variety of mark making skills; applying techniques and processes taught to several still life studies.</p> <p>Concentrating on *abstract drawing techniques *Creative use of colour *Drawing in 3D *mark making and colour *rendering and tone</p> <p>Artists: Lichtenstein Patrick Caulfield</p>	<p>Lino Printing: Over the Spring term students will be learning a variety of mark making skills; applying techniques and processes taught to studies of insects and bugs. Generating individual designs ready to be lino printed.</p> <p>Concentrating on *abstract drawing techniques *learning the art of lino printing *using specific cutting tools/techniques *developing design ideas suitable for lino printing</p> <p>Artists: Rosalind Monks, Natalie McIntyre, Lucy Arnold.</p>	<p>Relief Artwork: Plaster casting Over the Summer term students will be learning how to transfer designs from a 2d impression to a 3d outcome, on the form of a relief. Using plaster casting and clay they will extend and develop their bug drawings into a 3-d outcome.</p> <p>Concentrating on *abstract mark making with tools *how to make plaster casts and mould *negative and positive shapes</p> <p>Artists: Vladimir Gvozdev, Rachel Whiteread</p>

Through the year, they will be building skills in:

- Problem solving
- Creativity and individuality
- Literacy skills/Key terminology in Art and Design
- Produce creative work, exploring their ideas and recording their experiences
- Become proficient in drawing, painting, sculpture and other art, craft, and design techniques
- Evaluate and analyze creative works using the language of art, craft, and design

- Know about great artists, craft makers and designers, and understand the historical and cultural development of their art forms.

What learning will your child need to do beyond the classroom?

There will be two homework tasks for each half term. Which will be an extension and informative to what will be completed in class. Time management and planning plenty of time to do these tasks are part of the learning.

Where possible, practice, independently, the skills and techniques taught in class. Students are encouraged to keep a separate sketchbook for their practice and independent drawings. We are always keen to see what students create out of the classroom environment.

How will they be assessed?

Students will have a sketchbook to support the course, within which they will receive feedback and guidance.

Students at the end of each term will complete a Baseline Assessment, that will test their learning from that specific topic. As they move onto the second and third topic, their Baseline Assessments will include questions to test them from prior learning in previous topics, for example:

Autumn Topic: Still Life	Spring Topic: Printmaking	Summer Topic: Clay and Plaster Sculpting
Assessment : 50 mark questions:	Assessment 50 mark questions:	Assessment 50 mark questions:
Techniques A drawing Task Art Literacy/History	Techniques and stages of lino printing Exploring design solutions A drawing Task Art Literacy and Artists	Explaining clay and plaster casting techniques A drawing Task Art Literacy/History/Artists
Total 50 marks	5 Mark questions on Still life artworks Total 55 marks	10 Mark questions on Lino Printing and Still life artwork Total 60 marks

How can they develop their learning beyond the formal curriculum?

We would always encourage any independent learning, there are many ways in which you can do that,

- Visit Galleries and Exhibitions
- Read bibliographies of Artists and Designers
- How to Draw cool stuff by Catherine Holmes <https://g.co/kgs/aQpVFS>
- Experiment Drawing with CAD
- Take photographs of things of interest
- Keep an independent Sketchbook
- Talk to your Child about Art
- <https://artsandculture.google.com/project/learning-art>
- Book: We Are Artists by Kari Herbert
- Book: Artists Children Should Know by Angela Wenzel
- BBC Bitesize

DRAMA



What will your child be learning?

Autumn

Improvisation and Devising

Play: The Exam

Naturalism and non-Naturalism

Spring

Shakespeare

Theatre Trip

Summer

Devising Project

Through the year, they will be building skills in:

Performance from a script; Devised performance; Theatre discipline; Line-learning; Working in a team.

What learning will your child need to do beyond the classroom?

There is not much homework in Drama in Year 8. At particular times of year (for auditions or assessments) there will be small amounts of line-learning. Those who choose to participate in a school play will of course have additional work to do.

How can you support your child's learning?

Line-learning tips can be given on request as and when needed. We would always encourage you to expose your children to live theatre as often as possible.

How will they be assessed?

Pupils will participate in practical assessments throughout the year. There will often be no preparation required for these outside of class time, but on occasion line-learning will be required.

How can they develop their learning beyond the formal curriculum?

We would always encourage you to expose your children to live theatre as often as possible. Those interested in developing their Drama skills should consider participating in a school play; signing up to a Drama club; taking Lamda lessons; or looking into Drama opportunities in your local community.

FRENCH



What will your child be learning?

Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
<i>Mes vacances – my holidays</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Holiday locations- Staying in a hotel- Holiday activities- Transport- When a holiday goes wrong- Future holiday plans	<i>La vie saine – healthy living</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Sporting opportunities- Sporting heroes- Comparing sports- Success in sport- Parts of the body and illness- Visiting the doctor	<i>Les Choristes – film study</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Describing films and opinions- Reviewing a film- Revision of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Personal characteristics- Clothes- Future tense

Through the year, they will build on the present tense verb skills and will develop the ability to use the perfect (past) and near future tenses. They will continue to develop their ability to give opinions by including opinions about past events, and introducing the comparative. From a global perspective, pupils in Year 8 will each receive a pen pal at our partner school in France and will have opportunities both within and beyond the curriculum to communicate with their partners.

What learning will your child need to do beyond the classroom?

Regular learning of vocabulary and grammatical structures is critical to success in language learning. Pupils should therefore be learning vocabulary every week, and this learning should be spaced through the week – 10 minutes three or four times a week will be far more effective, than 30-40 minutes once a week. Vocabulary testing will take place through formal and informal methods on a regular basis. There will also be a weekly homework task, which may take the form of a written task, a reading comprehension, or a task on Active Learn or Language Gym.

How can you support your child's learning?

We absolutely do not expect any parent to have knowledge of the language that their child is learning. However, there are lots of things that you can do to support their learning: Ask them to explain to you what they have been learning Attempt to learn (or re-learn) alongside them Test them on their vocabulary using the vocabulary sheet or sentence builder provided by their teacher Encourage them to engage in active learning methods – using look, cover, say, write, check for instance will help their writing skills to develop Helping them to choose the correct learning strategy for the purpose of the learning: for example, Quizlet is good for learning the meaning of the words, but not as good for independent writing or speaking; they need to practice for speaking by saying the phrases they have learnt out loud. Encourage them to participate enthusiastically in the pen-pal exchange program.

How will they be assessed?

Pupils will receive three in-class assessments per term. Each assessment will cover a different skill and pupils will be told at least one week in advance of the assessment. Homework in the week leading up to the assessment will consist of guided revision tasks. The Summer exams will consist of all four skills – the listening and speaking normal take place outside the scheduled exam week – and will cover content from the whole year.

How can they develop their learning beyond the formal curriculum?

Watch appropriate films or TV series in French with English subtitles – all of the main streaming services carry French titles, including films, cartoons and TV programmes. Please ensure that you check the age verification carefully as French age verification tends to have a higher tolerance level than in the UK. Seek to use their French in real-life practical situations, such as on visits to France – French speakers will always appreciate the effort, but you sometimes need to be persistent as they like to practice their English! Listen to French music on YouTube or Spotify – both have playlists of contemporary French popular music. Support your learning by using other apps, such as Duolingo, or by listening to French learning podcasts – available on Spotify. Communicate with your pen pal about topics of interest to you both.

GEOGRAPHY



What will your child be learning?

Autumn Term

Weather and Climate

Conflict in our world

Spring Term

Country case study - Japan

Our changing economic world - globalization and sustainable development

Summer Term

Climate change and sustainability

Through the year, they will be building skills in: the practical application of Math's with data handling tasks to present information in a variety of graph formats. Pupils will be expected to present their learning in a range of written formats including extended essays and newspaper articles. During the year, they will continue to improve their digital literacy using their devices for research and to create presentations of their learning. Pupils will be expected to improve their collaboration skills through group work activities and their confidence through presentations to their peers. The curriculum will provide pupils the chance to think critically about contemporary issues that are affecting our world.

What learning will your child need to do beyond the classroom?

Pupils will be set relevant homework tasks by their teacher on Class Charts. Each half term there will be a menu of a variety of tasks available linked to our vision of creativity, communication, critical thinking and collaboration. Examples of Geography homework will include revision to prepare for assessments, flipped learning such as research on a particular case study to prepare for lesson or curriculum related projects to extend and enrich learning outside of the classroom. Keeping their revision notes (mind maps, bullet point lists, diagrams) up to date will help prepare for end of topic and summer examinations.

How can you support your child's learning?

Firstly engage your child in conversation about what they have been learning, if they can explain it back to you it helps them to revise without them realizing it! Supporting with revision by asking them questions and encouraging a quiet space, free from distractions to engage in purposeful revision is a must! Pupils will be supported with appropriate revision strategies by their teacher so please ask your child about the strategies they have been shown. All homework set will be visible on the parent portal of Class Charts to keep you aware of what is being set and allow you to monitor its completion at home. Please contact your child's teacher if you have any questions and they will be happy to assist. At Key Stage 3 it is not necessary to purchase revision guides as these are often generic and may not contain all of the topics that your child is studying. The Geography team will provide revision support materials when they are relevant.

How will they be assessed?

Pupils will receive three in-class assessments per term. Each assessment will cover a different skill and pupils will be told at least one week in advance of the assessment. Homework in the week leading up to the assessment will consist of guided revision tasks.

How can they develop their learning beyond the formal curriculum?

The Geography team want to inspire the next generation of geographers and hope that this list of suggested ideas will enable your child to develop a love of the subject and an interest for the world around them. We hope you can also enjoy some of these suggestions with your child!

Read a geographical book. Have, and dip into, a good atlas at home.

- Download Google Earth, ideal for widening your geographical horizons. Google Maps is also useful and includes the excellent 'Street View' function
- Keeping up to date with Geographical news and current affairs. Read a good daily newspaper/ news websites—so much news has a geographical element. Keep a close eye on relevant news stories to become an informed, global citizen.
- Watching high quality documentaries and TED talks to enrich your learning. There are so many, and even dedicated channels on Freeview such as the Discovery Channel and National Geographic. Look at TED lectures online for up-to-date presentations and debates on wide ranging issues.
- Talking to your friends and family about what you have learnt.
- Develop a sense of the 'big picture' by forming synoptic links between topics.
- Keeping a glossary of key geographical terms. Use days out and holidays to experience the wider world and apply lesson knowledge to help identify the geography. Consider any

holiday or visit an informal geographical field trip. Read travel guides before and when you go –these will enable you to enjoy all aspects of your trip e.g. landscape and culture.

- Enter Geographical competitions –your teacher will share details of relevant competitions that you will be welcome to enter through the school year.

Of course, we recognize that our students have busy lives and that this level of engagement is not always possible all the time -but this is what you should aim for if you want to reach the highest level in the subject. You don't need to do ALL of these things to improve your Geography-just doing one or two of them will have an impact. Decide on two or three to focus on to improve your skills.

GERMAN



What will your child be learning?

Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Die Medien – the media <ul style="list-style-type: none">- TV- Reading- Technology- Music	Die Ferien – holidays <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Destinations- Accommodation- Activities- Travel and Transport- Weather- Problems	Balloon – film study <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Talking about films- Describing a film- Post-war Germany- Life in East Germany- Reunification

Through the year, they will build on the skills that they have learnt in Year 7 and develop their ability to talk in the past and future tenses. We will revisit the use of opinions. Our film study will also allow us to explore an exciting period of German history.

What learning will your child need to do beyond the classroom?

Regular learning of vocabulary and grammatical structures is critical to success in language learning. Pupils should therefore be learning vocabulary every week, and this learning should be spaced through the week – 10 minutes three or four times a week will be far more effective, than 30-40 minutes once a week. Vocabulary testing will take place through formal and informal methods on a regular basis.

There will also be a weekly homework task, which may take the form of a written task, a reading comprehension, or a task on Active Learn or Language Gym.

How can you support your child's learning?

We absolutely do not expect any parent to have knowledge of the language that their child is learning. However, there are lots of things that you can do to support their learning:

- Ask them to explain to you what they have been learning
- Attempt to learn (or re-learn) alongside them
- Test them on their vocabulary using the vocabulary sheet or sentence builder provided by their teacher
- Encourage them to engage in active learning methods – using look, cover, say, write, check for instance will help their writing skills to develop
- Helping them to choose the correct learning strategy for the purpose of the learning: for example, Quizlet is good for learning the meaning of the words, but not as good for independent writing or speaking; they need to practice speaking by saying the phrases they have learnt out loud. How will they be assessed? Pupils will receive three in-class assessments per term. Each assessment will cover a different skill, and pupils will be told at least one week in advance of the assessment. Homework in the week leading up to the assessment will consist of guided revision tasks. The Summer exams will consist of all four skills – the listening and speaking normal take place outside the scheduled exam week – and will cover content from the whole year.

How can they develop their learning beyond the formal curriculum?

- Watch appropriate films or TV series in German with English subtitles – many of the main streaming services carry German titles, including films, cartoons and TV programmes. Please ensure that you check the age verification carefully as German age verification tends to have a higher tolerance level than in the UK.
- Seek to use their German in real-life practical situations, such as on visits to German, Switzerland or Austria – German speakers will always appreciate the effort, but you sometimes need to be persistent as they like to practice their English!
- Listen to German music on YouTube or Spotify – both have playlists of contemporary French popular music. Support your learning by using other apps, such as DuoLingo, or by listening to German learning podcasts – available on Spotify.

HISTORY



What will your child be learning?

Autumn Term

The transatlantic slave trades.

Protest - why was the 19th century such a time of unrest?

Spring Term

World War One

The interwar years 1919- 1939

Summer Term

Remembering the Holocaust

Throughout the year, they will be building skills in: literacy by engaging with a variety of written resources and sources that will help them to understand the historical periods studied. They will learn about the past using contemporary sources from the time, which will require pupils to think carefully and infer meaning from the words and ideas expressed by those living in the past. Pupils will be expected to present their learning in a range of written formats including extended essays and newspaper articles. During the year, they will continue to improve their digital literacy using their devices for research and to create presentations of their learning. Pupils will be expected to improve their collaboration skills through group work activities and their confidence through presentations to their peers. The curriculum will provide pupils the chance to think critically about the actions and consequences of people living in the past and the legacy of those decisions in our world now.

What learning will your child need to do beyond the classroom?

Pupils will be set relevant homework tasks by their teacher on Class Charts. Each half term there will be a menu of a variety of tasks available linked to our vision of creativity, communication, critical thinking and collaboration. Examples of History homework will include revision to prepare for assessments, flipped learning such as research on a particular case study to prepare for lesson or curriculum related projects to extend and enrich learning outside of the classroom. Keeping their revision notes (mind maps, bullet point lists, diagrams) up to date will help prepare for end of topic and summer examinations.

How can you support your child's learning?

Firstly engage your child in conversation about what they have been learning, if they can explain it back to you it helps them to revise without them realizing it! Supporting with revision by asking them questions and encouraging a quiet space, free from distractions to engage in purposeful revision is a must! Pupils will be supported with appropriate revision strategies by their teacher so please ask your child about the strategies they have been shown. All homework set will be visible on the parent portal of Class Charts to keep you aware of what is being set and allow you to monitor its completion at home. Please contact your child's teacher if you have any questions and they will be happy to assist. At Key Stage 3 it is not necessary to purchase revision guides as these are often generic and may not contain all of the topics that your child is studying. Revision support materials will be provided by the History team when they are required.

How will they be assessed?

Pupils will receive three in-class assessments per term. Each assessment will cover a different skill and pupils will be told at least one week in advance of the assessment. Homework in the week leading up to the assessment will consist of guided revision tasks.

How can they develop their learning beyond the formal curriculum?

The History team want to inspire the next generation of historians and hope that this list of suggested ideas will enable your child to develop a love of the subject and an interest in the lives and people of the past. We hope you can also enjoy some of these suggestions with your child!

- Watch relevant history documentaries or historical films, read historical novels or nonfiction and keep a brief record in your book of what you've seen/read and how it relates to what you've been studying
- Talk to your friends and family about what you have seen/read
- Podcasts like In Our Time or You're Dead to Me on BBC Radio 4 (available on iPlayer) which discuss specific historical events
- Periodicals: BBC History Magazine and History Today are both high-quality publications with articles covering the full gamut of historical interest from the ancient to the present day. Each issue contains wider reading suggestions as well as historical fiction and non-fiction book reviews.
- TV/Films: Look regularly at TV listings for good quality historical documentaries, films etc. A number of good documentary series are available on DVD.

Websites:

- www.activehistory.co.uk
- www.tudors.org
- www.historylearningsite.co.uk
- www.johnandclare.net
- www.tudorhistory.org
- www.spartacus-educational.com
- Holiday visits Museums, e.g. British Museum; Imperial War Museum & Cabinet War Rooms; National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. Elsewhere: American Museum (Bath); Ashmolean Museum (Oxford); Fitzwilliam Museum (Cambridge); Jorvik Viking Centre Museum (York); National Museum of Scotland (Edinburgh); St Fagans (near Cardiff). Visit Historical Sites administered by the National Trust (www.nationaltrust.org.uk) and English Heritage (www.english-heritage.org.uk) and Cadw (www.cadw.gov.wales) –all websites have searchable directories –and also many great cathedrals around the country, e.g. Canterbury, Durham, Ely, Exeter, Hereford, Lincoln, Westminster Abbey, Winchester, Worcester, York Minster.

Volunteering: Look into volunteering opportunities with the National Trust and English Heritage (see websites above), as well as at museums.

Cathedral Camps: www.csv.org.uk spend your holiday working on conservation projects at a historical cathedral.

Archaeology: opportunities offered by the Young Archaeologists' Club (www.yac-uk.org) run by the Council for British Archaeology.

Competitions: Participation in competitions that your teacher will make you aware of during the year.

We recognize that our pupils have busy lives and that this level of engagement is not always possible all the time -but this is what you should aim for if you want to reach the highest level in the subject. You don't need to do ALL of these things to improve in History-just doing one or two of them will have an impact.

MUSIC



What will your child be learning?

Through the year, they will be building skills in:

- Singing
- Listening
- Composing
- Performing

What learning will your child need to do beyond the classroom?

Get involved! Consider participating in an extra-curricular ensemble – String group/Brass group/Drum group/Senior Choir/ Rock Band/Senior Chamber Choir. Auditions to be in the Year 7 and 8 musical.

How can you support your child's learning?

Many of the top orchestras have programmes for families: <https://lso.co.uk/lso-discovery/discovery-families.html> <https://www.royalalberthall.com/tickets/series/children-and-families/> <https://www.lpo.org.uk/what-s-on/families-children-and-teenagers.html>

How will they be assessed?

Ongoing assessment in lessons and a Listening exam in Year 7.

How can they develop their learning beyond the formal curriculum?

We are so fortunate to be living in a time when the internet can bring all sorts of wonderful experiences into our homes. These videos by the London Mozart Players are delightful for children of all ages: <https://www.londonmozartplayers.com/classical-for-kids/>

Core Beliefs and Values of the Music Department:

- Developing fluency in the use of staff notation is a gateway to musical independence
- The continued progression in group singing which strengthens pupils' ability to sing in harmony while further developing sound production and expressive performance has an impact on well being and builds community
- There is great value in listening as both a technical exercise (e.g. knowing that there are three beats in a bar) and an opportunity to explore musical meaning and purpose
- The opportunity to explore music through improvisation and encouragement to find an individual's own compositional voice is a valuable creative outlet

The use of music technology can be an important tool in giving all pupils access to a first-class education. Given that the keyboard is the main Digital Audio Workstation controller, it is desirable for most pupils to have some degree of proficiency in using it, e.g. the ability to form chords and improvise melodies, hence the inclusion of Keyboard Skills in Year 7 and 8.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES



Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Where do we find religion? To understand the historical spread and origins of the major world religions. To understand the sources of authority in a selection of world religions.	What does a 'religious life' mean? To understand the influence religion has on the daily lives of its followers. To explain the impact religious people can have on helping in the world.	How can we choose right from wrong? Philosophical lessons bringing together all of the learning from Key Stage 3.

What will your child be learning?

Through the year, they will be building skills in: literacy by engaging with a variety of written resources and sources that will help them to understand the religious and philosophical perspectives being studied. They will learn about religions using extracts from the teachings of those religions and the ideas and opinions expressed by followers. This will require pupils to think carefully and infer meaning from the words and ideas expressed by those who identify with that religion or world view. Pupils will be expected to present their learning in a range of written formats including extended essays. During the year, they will continue to improve their digital literacy using their devices for research and to create presentations of their learning. Pupils will be expected to improve their collaboration skills through group work activities and their confidence through presentations to their peers. The curriculum will provide pupils the chance to think critically about a variety of different religions and world views in the context of how they influence the lives of followers. Pupils will be expected to respect these different perspectives to help develop their global perspective.

What learning will your child need to do beyond the classroom?

Pupils will be set relevant homework tasks by their teacher on Firefly. These will take a variety of formats as appropriate through the year. Examples of Religious Studies homework will include revision to prepare for assessments, flipped learning such as research on a particular person or event/festival to prepare for lesson or curriculum related projects to extend and enrich learning outside of the classroom. Keeping their revision notes (mind maps, bullet point lists, diagrams) up to date will help prepare for end of topic and summer examinations.

How can you support your child's learning?

Firstly engage your child in conversation about what they have been learning, if they can explain it back to you it helps them to revise without them realizing it! Supporting with revision by asking them questions and encouraging a quiet space, free from distractions to engage in purposeful revision is a must! Pupils will be supported with appropriate revision strategies by their teacher so please ask your child about the strategies they have been shown. All homework set will be visible on the parent portal of Firefly to keep you aware of what is being set and allow you to monitor its completion at home. Please contact your child's teacher if you have any questions and they will be happy to assist. At Key Stage 3 it is not necessary to purchase revision guides as these are often generic and may not contain all of the topics that your child is studying. Revision support materials will be provided by the Religious Studies team when they are required.

How will they be assessed?

Pupils will receive three in-class assessments per term. Each assessment will cover a different skill and pupils will be told at least one week in advance of the assessment. Homework in the week leading up to the assessment will consist of guided revision tasks.

How can they develop their learning beyond the formal curriculum?

The Religious Studies team want to inspire your child to develop a curiosity for understanding people of different beliefs and cultures around them. We hope that this list of suggested ideas will enable your child to develop a love of the subject and an interest in the lives and world views from around the globe. We hope you can also enjoy some of these suggestions with your child!

- Ethical issues can be discovered in all subjects from Science to PE and are all around us in the media. Film, Cinema and DVD's can prompt you to ponder philosophical, religious and ethical themes. The Life of Pi is a fabulous film which explores one boy's adventures through the world of ideas and faiths in a warm, colorful and visually entrancing way. For those of you who like the cinema, you might be surprised how many films have an ethical, religious or philosophical element. The Imitation Game is a fascinating historical film about the work of Alan Turing in the breaking of the Enigma code in WW2 which covers some meaty ethical topics. The Truman Show is an excellent introduction to thinking about whether we merely accept reality as it first appears to us, or whether we yearn to question and to be free. These are just a few films that are age appropriate. As you get older, there are even more films open to you. Perhaps you could keep a film journal and record your thoughts.
- Listen to the Radio for example BBC Radio 4 Beyond Belief is a discussion programme that looks at various religions and philosophical themes. Also on BBC Radio 4 is Moral Maze. As the title suggests, this is a debate programme about moral issues. The moral issues surrounding medical ethics, responses to poverty and suffering, equality, justice etc. are all argued out.

Follow these on Twitter

@alaindebotton–writer, mostly of ‘Religion for Atheists’

@IslamicThinking–Updates on Islamic charities, scripture quotes and general encouragement and wisdom for Muslims on Twitter.

@BHAhumanists–British Humanist Association. A national charity working on behalf of non-religious people who seek to live ethical and fulfilling lives based on reason and humanity

@ABCJustin–Archbishop of Canterbury, with others encourages flourishing, reconciled churches which love and worship Jesus and seek to change the world.

@RevRichardColes–Cleric and broadcaster, former Communard, co presenter of Saturday Live, Parish Priest of Findon.

@Microphilosophy–follow the website of writer and philosopher Julian Baggini

@giles_fraser-English Anglican priest, journalist and broadcaster. He is currently the priest-in-charge at St Mary's, Newington, near the Elephant and Castle, south London, and writes a weekly Friday column for The Guardian, as well as appearing frequently on BBC Radio 4

@StephenLaw60-Dr Stephen Law philosopher; author, The War for Children’s Minds. Dr Stephen Law is a humanist and author of the Oxford University Press Very Short Introduction to Humanism.

@DalaiLama–The official feed of the Office of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama.

- Holidays and trips may present you with the opportunity to visit places of worship, take the chance to go and see first-hand the places of worship we have described in lesson. You may also find yourself visiting places of pilgrimage or a museum related to an important and inspirational figure that we have studied.
- Cathedral Camps: www.csv.org.uk spend your holiday working on conservation projects at a historical cathedral.
- Talk to your parents about what you have been learning in class.
- Your teacher will provide you with opportunities to participate in Religious Studies themed competitions, watch out for details shared through the year! We recognize that our pupils have busy lives and that this level of engagement is not always possible all the time -but this is what you should aim for if you want to reach the highest level in the subject. You don’t need to do ALL of these things to improve in Religious Studies-just doing one or two of them will have an impact.

SPANISH



How is the course organized?

Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
<i>A comer – food and drink</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Cultural differences at meal times- Opinions of food and drink- Planning a party	<i>Todo sobre mi vida – technology and media</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Use of phones and social media- TV programmes- Music	<i>Coco – film study</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Describing films and opinions- Reviewing a film- Revision of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Film vocab

Through the year, they will build on the present tense verb skills and will develop the ability to use the preterite (past) and near future tenses. They will continue to develop their ability to give opinions by including opinions about past events, and introducing the comparative. From a global perspective, pupils in Year 8 will have opportunities to have native speaker input to their lessons through links to our Cognita partner schools in Chile.

What learning will your child need to do beyond the classroom?

Regular learning of vocabulary and grammatical structures is critical to success in language learning. Pupils should therefore receive weekly home learning worksheets which will include vocabulary learning tasks as well as grammar consolidation and comprehension tasks.

This learning should be spaced through the week – 10 minutes three or four times a week will be far more effective, than 30-40 minutes once a week. Vocabulary testing will take place through formal and informal methods on a regular basis.

How can you support your child's learning?

We absolutely do not expect any parent to have knowledge of the language that their child is learning. However, there are lots of things that you can do to support their learning:

- Ask them to explain to you what they have been learning
- Attempt to learn (or re-learn) alongside them
- Test them on their vocabulary using the vocabulary sheet or sentence builder provided by their teacher
- Encourage use of the Sentence Builder Packs while completing vocabulary learning or

homework tasks

- Encourage them to engage in active learning methods – using look, cover, say, write, check for instance will help their writing skills to develop
- Helping them to choose the correct learning strategy for the purpose of the learning: for example, Quizlet is good for learning the meaning of the words, but not as good for independent writing or speaking; they need to practice for speaking by saying the phrases they have learnt out loud. How will they be assessed? Pupils will receive three in-class assessments per term. Each assessment will cover a different skill and pupils will be told at least one week in advance of the assessment. Homework in the week leading up to the assessment will consist of guided revision tasks. The Summer exams will consist of all four skills – the listening and speaking normal take place outside the scheduled exam week – and will cover content from the whole year.

How can they develop their learning beyond the formal curriculum?

- Watch appropriate films or TV series in Spanish with English subtitles – all of the main streaming services carry Spanish titles, including films, cartoons and TV programmes. Please ensure that you check the age verification carefully as Spanish age verification tends to have a higher tolerance level than in the UK.
- Seek to use their Spanish in real-life practical situations, such as on visits to Spain or Spanish speaking countries – Spanish speakers will always appreciate the effort, but you sometimes need to be persistent as they like to practice their English!
- Listen to Spanish music on YouTube or Spotify – both have playlists of contemporary Spanish popular music.
- Support your learning by using other apps, such as DuoLingo, or by listening to Spanish learning podcasts – available on Spotify.