



MAYFIELD GRAMMAR SCHOOL
GRAVESEND

YEAR 8

CURRICULUM



2018 – 2019

Introduction

This booklet is designed to provide information about the curriculum that your daughter will be studying during Year 8 and follows on from the booklet that you received last year. The information is ordered alphabetically by Faculty and your daughter will be studying all of the subjects, except that she will only be taking two of the foreign languages described.

Across the curriculum a variety of teaching and learning strategies will be employed so that all students are provided with the opportunities to be fully motivated and stretched according to their aptitude and ability. Increased attention is paid to the development of Thinking Skills across all subjects. Regular and varied assessment tasks will be set.

Assessment for Learning is a national initiative designed to improve the quality of feedback to students to enable them to make the next steps to improvement regardless of the level they are at. All subjects, in accordance with this initiative will use the following approaches to assessment:

- Most written work will be marked with comments that identify targets for improvement. These targets will be signalled with the symbol “T” in a circle. Students are expected to record these targets and use them when planning the next piece of work. At intervals during the year students will be given information about what National Curriculum level they are working at.
- Additionally, questions will be frequently asked in class using the “No Hands Up” rule. This is designed to ensure that all students participate in class discussion. Occasionally teaching staff will use volunteers to answer questions depending on the purpose of the activity.
- Peer and self assessment is a key characteristic of Assessment for Learning. In practice this means that students will be increasingly asked to assess their own or other people’s work using the relevant assessment criteria. Becoming more familiar with assessment criteria increases students’ understanding of how to improve their own work.

Citizenship is a statutory subject and is delivered through all subjects in the curriculum. It enables students to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding to become informed, active and responsible members of local, national and global communities. The programme of study allows us to build on what we already do and develop a curriculum relevant to our students.

Your daughter will be expected to monitor her own progress and attendance, not only through systems in place in the subjects, but also through using her Student Diary and Planner effectively. She will know and have recorded the target grades that she is expected to achieve during the year, across all her subjects. These targets take into account her achievements during Year 7. You will be able to monitor her progress towards these targets by following marking, feedback and your daughter’s response in her class work books. We will publish progress and effort grades at four Academic Review points. Student targets and progress grades will be reported using GCSE grades 9-1. She will also be monitoring the citizenship learning opportunities she experiences.

In addition to their academic studies all students will have regular Personal, Social and Health Education lessons. Included in these lessons is e-safety and online behaviour, resilience, FGM

and implementing the government's Prevent strategy, drugs and alcohol awareness and coping with anxiety. The Form Tutor and Miss Finlay, Learning Leader for Year 8, will liaise with you if any problems appear in your daughter's development or her progress.

I hope you find the information useful, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries resulting from it.

C Kemp
Deputy Headteacher

Citizenship

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Careers Education

We place a strong emphasis on Careers Education and on students developing employability skills. We hold the Investors in Careers Award which means we have a comprehensive Careers Education programme that is responsive to student need and includes Work Place Learning and Enterprise education from Years 7 to 13.

In Years 7 to 9:

- Students will study a wide range of subjects that will give them a good educational foundation for accessing the full range of careers.
- Gain awareness of the research methods and resources available relating to Careers.
- Negotiate and interrogate research packages and websites using the school network to extract information on careers.
- Gain independent advice and guidance to inform and support student choice from GCSE and beyond.

Careers Education is delivered through the PSHE programme and is also embedded in subject delivery. Off timetable days and extra-curricular events enable students to experience Enterprise and Work Related Learning, some of this is run in-house and some through specialist organisations that come in to school.

At the Year 9 Parents' Meeting held in January next academic year the Careers Leader outlines the more intensive provision that students receive in preparation for their GCSE choices. Year 9 student choice is supported by the Careers Leader in Assemblies, advising students on qualifications and career pathways. This work supports that done by Academic Tutors, Learning Leaders and the Head of Upper School who look at student choices in relation to their individual strengths and interests.

Creative Arts

Art & Design

Subject Leader: Miss V Turner

The Year 8 Art and Design course focuses on an exploration of the formal elements colour and texture. Colour mixing and colour theories will be applied as experimental work evolves using mixed media, painting and print making techniques. Students will increasingly generate and make use of preparatory studies in their completion of more complex project work. Discussions will encourage students to take risks and to review and refine their work. Sketchbooks will continue to support this. The work of artists from a range of backgrounds and different points in history will be critically analysed and will inform developing ideas. Students gain a greater understanding of the context and purpose of Art works and will express their own views..

Design and Technology

Subject Leader: Ms S Kemp

In Year 7 and 8 our aim is to produce creative autonomous designers with the will and insight to want to change and modify our environment for the better. This is taught through exciting units of work that are spread over two years in the material areas of food, graphics, product design and textiles. The core of every material area is the design process which develops skills in:

- Generation, development and communication of ideas
- Creative response and problem solving of briefs and tasks
- Applying knowledge and understanding of materials and processes
- Reflection and evaluation of own designing

By the end of Year 8 students will have a portfolio of 2D and 3D design solutions in all four material areas that will evidence their analytical, theoretical and practical capabilities within the context of design.

Students develop skills taught in year 7 with numerous tools, equipment and machinery in the different practical workshops of textiles, food, graphics and resistant materials. There is a strong emphasis on health, safety and hygiene and students are taught the correct skills and procedures needed when carrying out their work.

Physical Education

Subject Leader: Miss L McCormack

In Year 8 students build on skills and knowledge gained in Year 7. They have the opportunity to access a wide variety of extra-curricular activities to embed the knowledge they have learned within their lessons.

Key areas of focus in Year 8 allow students to have the opportunity to:

- Use a range of tactics and strategies to overcome opponents in direct competition through team and individual games whilst taking part in basketball, cricket, football, netball, rounders and hockey
- Develop their technique and improve their performance in other competitive sports whilst taking part in fitness, athletics and gymnastics
- Perform dances using advanced dance techniques within a range of dance styles and forms.
- Take part in outdoor and adventurous activities which present intellectual and physical challenges and be encouraged to work in a team, building on trust and developing skills to solve problems, either individually or as a group

- Analyse their performances compared to previous ones and demonstrate improvement to achieve their personal best.
- Have the opportunity to take part in competitive sports and activities outside school through community links or sports clubs.

Students' theoretical knowledge is assessed through teacher questioning during lessons. Teacher, pupil and self-assessments are all a focal part of the students learning in physical education, this occurs throughout the year.

Students take part in a number of Inter House competitions during Year 8.

English

Faculty Leader: Mrs M Weston

English

The Year 8 course continues the study of English Language and Literature and begins to equip the students with the skills required at GCSE. The course is organised into several units of work: Poetry of Childhood, The Modern Novel, Media, a modern drama text and the study of a play by Shakespeare. Each unit contains assessments in the three Attainment Targets: "Speaking and Listening", "Reading" and "Writing", and all written work is assessed for technical accuracy in spelling, grammar, punctuation and presentation.

Students learn to write analytical and imaginative essays based on the literature they read, and in language work they are introduced to the techniques of discursive, descriptive, factual and creative writing. Particular stress is also placed on the teaching of grammar, punctuation, spelling and vocabulary skills. Oral work covers a wide range of activities from collaborative group discussion to drama. Written assessments are retained within a student's portfolio, along with a record of oral assessments, personal profiles and reading logs. Students also continue with the 'Reading Challenge' in which they can earn merits and certificates as they work towards their bronze, silver and gold awards. Students also keep a record of their own targets in speaking and listening, reading and writing.

Drama

The Year 8 Drama course focuses on introducing students to a variety of dramatic skills through different units including:

Introduction to Drama:

Initially students begin exploring movement and vocal skills to create character through improvisation. This unit encourages students to develop confidence in performance.

Ways of Devising:

Devising allows students to respond to a stimulus, for example; a picture, poem or object and develop their own original performance work through rehearsal. Students consider narrative structure, dramatic devices, performance style and staging types when developing their work.

Texts in Practice:

Texts in Practice allows students to, interpret texts, create and communicate meaning and realise artistic intention through the study of a play text. Students consider the roles of designers in performance and how they communicate meaning to an audience through their design element.

The introduction to drama in Year 8 begins to equip students with the skills required at GCSE. Throughout the course students learn to collaborate with others, think analytically and evaluate effectively. Students develop their knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre terminology including stage positioning, stage configurations and dramatic devices.

Humanities

Faculty Leader: Ms K Burke

Geography

Subject Leader: Mr T Orr

Our aim within the Geography Department is for students to acquire the key skills and content knowledge that will allow them to confidently engage with the processes and issues that shape the world around them.

Key areas that will be developed and assessed include:

- **Places and people** – understanding the characteristics of people and place and the interactions between the human and physical environments.
- **Geographical writing** – developing the ability to write focused responses from descriptions through to evaluative longer answers.
- **Geographical fieldwork** – the ability to plan, carry out and reflect on collecting primary and secondary data to help investigate geographic issues.
- **Map work and graphical skill** – improve both students locational knowledge and ability to interpret map based information and other graphical representations of data.
- **Numerical and statistical skill** – develop students ability to accurately manipulate and interpret data to make sense of the world around them.

Aspects of all these areas feature within each academic year. An overview of the content areas covered in the curriculum for each year group follows below:

The work this year builds on the foundations of Year 7 but with a distinctly more global outlook. Students start the year with an overview of key global geographic issues including globalisation, climate change, sustainable development and global development. As students will start the GCSE Geography course in Year 9, Year 8 is structured to provide all pupils with the important locational and issue based knowledge and skills from which they can then target the highest grades in the future.

Having studied some of the key global issues students will then look in more depth at issues and processes affecting key countries and regions of the world including Africa, China, India, Russia and the Middle East. Fieldwork is an important aspect to any thorough study of Geography and in Year 8 students will be given the opportunity to conduct fieldwork in the local environment looking at the issue of sustainability in urban areas.

During the year, regular but varied assessment are carried out with a focus on learning content and skills.

History

Subject Leader: Mr N McPhail

The course is intended to stimulate an interest in the past, either as the basis for further study in the subject or as a personal interest. The course aims to:-

- Develop knowledge and understanding of History
- Develop the ability to describe and explain historical change, and analyse features of historical situations.
- Develop the ability to understand interpretation of History.
- Develop the ability to obtain evidence from historical sources, and form judgements about their reliability and value.

The course content covers Britain between the years 1500-c1700, through a series of depth and thematic studies.

The skills assessed throughout the Year 8 course are:

- (i) Ability to select, organise and use historical knowledge.
- (ii) Ability to analyse and explain historical events, changes and issues.
- (iii) Ability to use historical sources and understand interpretations of the past.

Religious Education

Subject Leader: Ms K Burke

The Religious Education course in Year 8 continues to follow the guidelines from the Kent Agreed Syllabus. The focus is on developing skills which include reflection, interpretation, research, analysis and questioning. Progress will be judged against these skills.

The content of the course will focus on four of the world's major religions, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism and Sikhism. We have a focus on society and ethics in Year 8 and we study animal rights, poverty, equality, marriage, good and evil as well as war and peace. Each of these topics is explored through the eyes of one religion. In addition there is more emphasis on what the students themselves believe about these issues and what they might learn about the topic from the various faiths.

We use a variety of learning methods including drama, projects, practical assignments and written work including essays and poems. We hope to broaden our students' horizons and experiences in as many ways as is practical in the time available.

There are two attainment targets in Religious Education: Learning about Religion and Learning from Religion. Students will be regularly assessed against these targets and will be encouraged to develop their literacy skills as well.

Mathematics, Computing & Economics

Faculty Leader: Mr S A Windle

Mathematics

The Year 8 course continues to build on the Numeracy Framework established in Year 7. Mathematics is taught using the Year 7-9 Collins New Maths Frameworking Book 3 as the main textbook. We aim to ensure that arithmetic skills are secure, there is a sound understanding

of basic geometric principles, algebraic techniques are extended and statistical techniques are developed.

The course includes written tests that will be set throughout the year in addition to the end of year examination. Functional Mathematics forms an integral part of our students' learning. Homework tasks will be set to practise the skills taught and enhance understanding. Tasks will vary and may include completing written questions, carrying out research or completing tasks set on the MyMaths website.

Students will be allocated to sets for the start of the year. These sets are not fixed throughout their time in MGS and are flexible with the individual student's abilities and progress.

All students have the opportunity to participate in the Junior Mathematics Challenge held in April of Year 8.

Using and Applying Standard Techniques – a measure of how well a pupil can understand and apply procedures in mathematics ranging from routine to multi-step procedures.

Reasoning, Interpreting and Communicating Mathematically – a measure of how well a pupil can demonstrate and communicate her reasoning when solving mathematical puzzles and problems which become increasingly difficult.

Solving Problems within Mathematics and in Other Contexts – a measure of how well a pupil can solve mathematical and non-mathematical problems, which increase in complexity.

Computing

Subject Leader: Mr S Grewal

In Year 8 students build on the skills and knowledge introduced in Year 7 and it is aimed to increase their understanding of computing and its applications. During the course students learn how to use HTML and Dreamweaver software to create and edit their website project about a hobby/interest of their own. Students develop their understanding of handling data using a database and they learn how to search databases effectively. They develop their knowledge of computing systems and the internet through the study of Networks. Students develop their graphical skills by using animation software to prepare pictures and animations. Also, students begin to use a text based programming language called Small Basic to help them prepare for the Year 9 Computing course.

Modern Foreign Languages

Director of Languages: Mr S Wellens

At Mayfield Grammar School, we teach French, German and Spanish from Year 7 through to Year 13 and also Mandarin Chinese in Year 7, 8 and Sixth Form as part of the Mandarin Excellence Programme.

Throughout Year 7 – 9 we aim to teach our students a variety of topics and structures to prepare them for GCSE examinations. Especially the following skills are important and follow the requirements of the National Curriculum:

- **listening:** this skills allows students to interpret the spoken word of the foreign language, delivered at increasing speed and complexity
- **dictation:** this skills allows students to practise their listening comprehension by transcribing the spoken word to train and test their understanding of phonetics

- **reading:** this skill allows students to interpret the written word of the foreign language from authentic, semi-authentic and non-authentic resources
- **speaking:** this skill allows students to practise their ability to communicate in the foreign language, including an increasing range of vocabulary and using different tenses to refer to past, current and future events and in increasing detail and with increasing spontaneity
- **writing:** this skill allows student to practise the areas as the speaking skill, but in written form and with attention to accuracy
- **translation:** this skill relies on the students' knowledge of vocabulary and grammar and their reading comprehension by practising the ability to translate from and into the foreign language.

In all Modern Foreign Languages, our aim is for the students to develop a large vocabulary which they are able to use in different contexts and situations. We of course teach grammar systematically in order to allow the students to use the vocabulary they acquire correctly in different structures.

In all Modern Foreign Languages, we make use of the course books, CDs, online media and worksheets and we vary the teaching methods so that students can work in pairs, groups and individually.

Aside from this, we also teach students about the cultures of the countries where the languages that they study are spoken, with an aim to make the students not only able to communicate but also interested in different cultures, their traditions and ways to view the world. Together with topics about citizenship (e. g. healthy living), our students develop a better understanding of the global community we are all part of.

French

Subject Leader: Mrs M Lennon

The course is based on the text books Allez 1 and Allez 2, which comprise topics such as self-description, opinions and tastes, school, family and friends, animals, food and drink, clothes, holidays, description of town and area, of habits and daily routine, famous French people, the media and new technology, as well as eating habits and being healthy. All topics include an emphasis on France but also the French-speaking countries around the world, in order to foster students' interest for all those different cultures as well as to increase their awareness of the wider communities where French is spoken.

German

Subject Leader: Mr J Lobo

The course is based on the text book Echo 2 for Year 8 with topics such as family, leisure and school. All topics are now studied with an additional focus on the culture and society of German-speaking countries.

Spanish

Subject Leader: Mrs T Pina

The course is based on the text book Zoom1. Year 8 sees a greater introduction of grammar and pupils are expected to be able to write short but accurate texts on their daily routine and where they live. We also introduce the future tense.

Mandarin Chinese

Subject Leader: Mr J Lobo

The course is based on the text book Jinbu 2 with topics such as holidays, personal identity, town and country living, and shopping. The Mandarin Excellence Programme is an intensive course based on four hours of lessons per week with an expectation of independent study and practice. Students therefore make accelerated progress and gain proficiency in listening and responding to spoken Chinese, as well as both reading and writing Chinese characters.

The course of study includes a two-week intensive learning summer camp in China in the summer term, providing a fully immersive experience for our Mandarin learners.

In all Modern Foreign Languages, students' progress with regard to vocabulary knowledge and the ability to apply grammar correctly is regularly assessed through tests throughout the term and of course in the End of Year Examinations, with an increased focus on the ability to communicate accurately in speaking and writing, using a wide range of vocabulary and structures.

Our overall goal in Years 7 – 9 is to lay very good foundations for our students which can then be consolidated and expanded during their GCSE studies, both of which is achieved by a good commitment to learning and practising the vocabulary, grammar and skills that we work on in lessons.

Science

Faculty Leader: Miss E Yeong

This course is based on the Exploring Science course. It follows a series of topics that are broadly based on the three key areas of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. In addition we work on scientific skills such as:

- **Scientific attitudes:** looking at objectivity, scientific methods and risks
- **Experimental skills and investigations:** Asking questions, making predictions, planning and carrying out experiments and evaluating those experiments.
- **Analysis and evaluation:** Applying mathematical concepts to scientific situations, taking and analyzing data and identifying new questions to ask from this data.
- **Measurement:** Using standard units, using simple equations and looking at statistical techniques.

A range of teaching and learning techniques are used. Each topic includes activities that are assessed against clear assessment criteria and students are set clear targets to help them understand how they can improve. Tests are set at the end of each unit.