

2026-27 Year 8 Curriculum overview

Subject	Autumn Term	
Art	<u>Photorealism</u> Pupils will look at the photorealist artist Sarah Graham. They will look at perspective and composition. They will develop tonal and painterly techniques whilst realising their own confectionary outcome. Oil pastels on dark background will be explored. Art History Module Students will look at Art through time and see how the invention of the camera affected Art.	
Computing	Vector graphics:- This unit offers learners the opportunity to design graphics using vector graphic editing software. By the end of the unit learners will have produced an illustration, a logo, or some icons using vector graphics. The lessons are tailored to Inkscape (inkscape.org), which is open source and cross-platform, but the resources should be readily adaptable to any vector graphics editor. Python Programming I:- This unit introduces learners to text-based programming with Python. The lessons form a journey that starts with simple programs involving input and output, and gradually moves on through arithmetic operations, randomness, selection, and iteration. Emphasis is placed on tackling common misconceptions and elucidating the mechanics of program execution.	
Drama	<u>Choral speaking and hot seating</u> Students will learn how to use their voice- pitch, tone, pace and volume through choral speaking. They will develop their use of unison and cannon action and work towards performing a poem as an ensemble. Students will take on a second script to cement and develop their use of choral speaking, cannon and unison. Students will learn what hot seating is and the different ways it can be used in performance and during the devising process.	<u>Script</u> Students will learn lines from a variety of given play extracts, consider the importance of clear stage directions and learn how to implement them. Students will learn about performance rights and the importance of maintaining the writers intention. Students will consider how set, sound lighting and costume could enhance their performance. Students will learn how to operate stage lighting and will complete a technical rehearsal where they operate lighting and sound for each others performances.

	Students will use the poem 'One for the road' to explore characters and make decisions. They will create a performance based on the poem that demonstrates students prior knowledge of techniques and how to apply them effectively in performance.	
English	Class Reader: Analysing Literature Students will read 'Animal Farm' and explore themes of power, revolution and control. Their study will include how language and structure are used to create effect as they consider the topic's 'Big Idea': The social contract and moral decay.	Rhetoric: Transactional Writing Students will study rhetorical writing alongside reading 'Frankenstein' (Pullman's play adaptation). This unit will allow students to gather knowledge of rhetorical devices, practice developing their writing skills and explore a variety of real-world examples as they work on composing their own Article. Inspired by the accompanying text, students will question the value and morality of 'performative ideology'
Geography	Africa – Is this the Continent of Contrasts In this unit, students take a deep dive into the diverse and dynamic continent of Africa. They begin by exploring how Africa can be mapped and discovering the realities behind common misconceptions. Through the study of regions such as the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, students investigate key geographical, political, and environmental issues from piracy off the Somali coast to drought, desertification, and the challenges of sustainable development. Using case studies, GIS tools, and virtual fieldwork, they examine how people interact with their environments and consider the work of conservationists in places like the Masai Mara. Students also explore global connections through topics such as fairtrade and climate variability, developing a balanced understanding of Africa's complexity and potential. The unit concludes with an assessment, enrichment through <i>Seven Worlds, One Planet: Africa</i>, and an <i>Earth Heroes</i> study on renewable energy and innovation through the Windmills project.	
History	Introduction to Year 8 history – followed by 'Who Were The Tudors?' - A unit exploring diversity and culture in Tudor England focusing on multicultural England, Religious changes with a link to the local history of 'Burscough Priory' and the dissolution of the monasteries and life for ordinary people. The Transatlantic Trade in Enslaved People - Exploring the causes of trade in enslaved people and the consequences of slavery for the people who were enslaved.	

	The Reformation - Investigating the significance of the break from Rome for our local area using historical sources. Exploring multiculturalism in Tudor society.	
Maths	During the first term of year 8, students will build on the foundational concepts introduced throughout year 7 and prior to this at KS2. Key content is revisited regularly through 'Do Now' tasks and prior knowledge checks, helping to reinforce learning and ensure long-term retention. The units outlined below are thoughtfully sequenced to support a progressive and coherent development of knowledge over time. Unit 1: Recognising linear and non-linear sequences, generating sequences from a given rule, generating sequences from algebraic rules, calculating the 'n'th term, using the 'n'th term to generate a sequence, determining whether terms exist in given sequences using the 'n'th term Unit 2: Ratio, understanding ratio, simplifying ratios, comparing ratios and fractions, dividing amounts into a given ratio, calculating missing values when one part is known. Unit 3: Equations – solving one step and two step equations, solving equations involving brackets, forming and solving equations, solving equations with unknowns on both sides, forming and solving equations with unknowns on both sides, identify and use formulae, expressions, identities and equations. Unit 4: Angles in parallel lines - To identify and calculate angles using rules formed by parallel lines and transversals.	
Music	Groove Makers: From Renaissance to EDM Students explore dance music through a range of historical and contemporary styles. They learn how rhythm, texture, and structure have evolved over time and use music technology to create original dance music compositions.	Groove Together: Building Bands with Chords Students develop ensemble performance skills through group music making using ukuleles and chord progressions. The unit focuses on collaboration, timing, listening, and understanding how harmony supports popular music performance.
RE	How Should We Treat Our Neighbours? To follow on from our year 7 topic of 'What does Belonging Mean?', we look at what Christians do within their society to teach kindness. We analyse what life was like at the time of Jesus and look at key groups such as the Zealots, Sadducees and the Pharisees and focus on why there was a need to teach 'love thy neighbour'.	What is the Purpose of Life? Hinduism Our next topic will be going further back into the past and discovering how Hinduism began, what Hinduism is and how it impacts the lives of believers today. We look at misconceptions of Hinduism, such as the belief that it is polytheistic religion. We creatively explore the different deities and what it means to worship as a Hindu in 21st century Britain. We also link Hinduism to Buddhism.

Science	Electricity & Magnetism		Interdependence:
	Static electricity and electrical circuits in series and parallel are taught first. Students then investigate magnetic fields, electromagnets and how motors work		Students study the ecosystem around them and the interdependence of organisms. Photosynthesis by producers and energy flow through food chains including toxic food webs follow on. Decay of organisms and predator and prey populations finish off the topic
Spanish	Students will know: A large variety of key verbs and the rules for conjugating regular verbs into past tense. Students will know how to: conjugate verbs into past tense to be able to describe events in the past and compare what people did.		
Technology DT	Personalised Art Deco trinket box- Students will develop the skills and knowledge they learnt in year 7, through a deeper understanding into the design cycle. Students will learn how to write their own design brief, write a justified specification for their project and design their products using isometric drawing techniques. Students will research past design movements to help inform their design ideas. Practically students will learn how to mark out and cut a comb and finger joint, how to file and prepare their material. They will develop their skills on 2D design to create a personalised design for their project.		
Technology Food	Students will learn about the different nutrients our body need to grow and develop at different stages through life. They will learn what energy requirements are and what a balanced diet is and what can happen if our diets are unbalanced. Students will learn how to prepare Spaghetti Bolognese and how to prepare and bake brownies.		

PSHE	Drugs and Alcohol Community and Careers
PE	The KS3 curriculum works on a rotation basis, and by the end of the year all students will have studied the same activities. 8A: Rugby, Football, Outdoor & Adventurous Activities (OAA), Netball and Handball 8B: Netball, Handball, Health Related Fitness (HRF), Table Tennis, Gymnastics 8C: Table Tennis, Gymnastics, Dance, Rugby, Football 8D: Rugby, Netball, Football, OAA, Health Related Fitness (HRF) 8E: Netball, Rugby, Handball, Dance, OAA Students will continue to explore the three strands of; Healthy Body; developing some advanced practical invasion games skills of passing over distance, receiving the ball one handed or with different parts of the body, outwitting an opponent with different methods, advanced football, defending using different techniques and advanced shooting. Plus aesthetic gymnastics skills including advanced skills and vaulting. Healthy Mind; explaining the three stages and benefits of a warmup, the different types of movement available at a joint and the rules, regulations and key points of how to perform skills and tactics across a range of sports Healthy Relationships; students will take on leadership roles in lesson and develop manners and respect when working with others

	Spring Term	
Art	<u>Architecture</u> The theme of Architecture is explored with pupils moving towards the artist Iñaki Aliste Lizarralde, an ex-interior designer turned illustrator. They will re-visit scale and proportion, this time from a bird's-eye view perspective looking closely at the floor plans of their favourite TV Shows. They will create their own pop-up paper sculpture interior room with a focus on individuality.	
Computing	Layers of computing systems:- This unit takes learners on a tour through the different layers of computing systems: from programs and the operating system, to the physical components that store and execute these programs, to the fundamental binary building blocks that these components consist of. The aim is to provide a concise overview of how computing systems operate, conveying the essentials and abstracting away the technical details that might confuse or put off learners. Developing for the web:- In this unit, learners will explore the technologies that make up the internet and World Wide Web. Starting with an exploration of the building blocks of the World Wide Web, HTML, and CSS, learners will investigate how websites are catalogued and organised for effective retrieval using search engines. By the end of the unit, learners will have a functioning website.	
Drama	Script writing Students will write a scene for an ending to a given script. Students will learn how to add clear stage directions and then give their script to another group to perform. Students will peer assess if their intentions as writers were met and identify their successes and areas for development. Students will write their own script for performance.	Physical theatre- World War 2 Students will learn how to use physical theatre to tell a story to music with a beginning, middle, and end. Students will focus on their physical actions and gestures and consider the pace of the performance to reflect character emotion. They will choose appropriate music to fit their performance.

English	Shakespeare: Julius Caesar Students will study Shakespeare's 'Julius Caesar' and explore themes of betrayal and honour. Their study will include how Shakespeare uses language, structure and stagecraft to create effect as they consider the topic's 'Big Idea': The Roman Ideal	Creative Writing: Gothic Students will study conventions of the gothic genre as they write about themes of repression and fear. This unit will allow students to gather knowledge of narrative methods, practice developing their writing skills, and explore a variety of high-quality examples as they work on composing their gothic narrative. To supplement their understanding of these topics, they will explore the 'Big Idea': The Faustian pact and moral damnation
Geography	Asia - Will this Continent Take Over the World? In this unit, students explore the vast and diverse continent of Asia, learning how to map its physical and human features and understanding why megacities have rapidly expanded. They examine globalisation and trade, study key Asian superpowers, and investigate major developments such as China's Three Gorges Dam and the region's booming textile industry. The unit covers political issues including North Korea's isolation and Southeast Asia's population control policies, as well as how countries like Japan manage natural hazards with innovative earthquake proof buildings. Students also consider the sustainability challenges faced by rapidly growing cities such as Dubai and explore the future of the Middle East without oil. Fieldwork activities allow students to apply their skills by researching and planning sustainable housing developments in their local area, using OS maps, Google Maps, and community data. The unit finishes with an assessment and an <i>Earth Heroes</i> project highlighting innovative solutions like floating schools.	
History	Case Study: Diary of an enslaved person - An opportunity to undertake personal research focusing on your chosen area of the life of an enslaved person. Structured support is given to help complete your case study, whilst developing independent learning. The Industrial Revolution - Exploring the significance of technological development in Britain, the impact on the landscape and life. Ordinary life in 19th Century Britain - Studying how the Industrial Revolution led to change and continuity in the lives of ordinary people.	

Maths	During the second term of year 8, students will build on the foundational concepts introduced throughout year 7 and prior to this at KS2. Key content is revisited regularly through 'Do Now' tasks and prior knowledge checks, helping to reinforce learning and ensure long-term retention. The units outlined below are thoughtfully sequenced to support a progressive and coherent development of knowledge over time. Unit 5: To understand and apply fractions and percentages by calculating fractions and percentages of amounts, using efficient methods including multipliers, and solving problems involving percentage change with and without a calculator. Unit 6: To confidently multiply and divide fractions and mixed numbers using reciprocal methods accurately. Unit 7: To understand and apply angle properties in triangles, quadrilaterals, and polygons, including calculating interior and exterior angles. To apply these skills in context to solve a range of angle problems. Unit 8: To represent, interpret and analyse data using bar charts, pie charts, pictograms and scatter graphs. Unit 9: To calculate mean, mode, median and range from discrete, continuous and grouped data.	
Music	Roots, Riddims & Reggae Students investigate the musical features and cultural significance of reggae music. Through ensemble performance they develop their understanding of off beat rhythms, bass lines and chord patterns whilst exploring the influence of Caribbean music traditions.	Drop the Bass: Beats, Bass & Flow Students explore the music of Rap and Hip-Hop through composition and performance. Using music technology, they create original tracks featuring beats, bass lines, chords and vocal elements whilst developing an understanding of groove, layering, and musical structure.
RE	What is the purpose of Life? Hinduism Do we need to suffer? Buddhism	
Science	<i>Variation and Evolution</i> This module introduces students to variation and genetics. Students briefly study the fossil record, evolution by natural selection and extinction	<i>Waves</i> A look at the properties of sound and light waves, comparing their similarities and differences. The eye and ear structures and functions
Spanish	<i>Students will know:</i> What reflexive verbs are, why and how they are used.	

	Students will know how to: use reflexive verbs appropriately along with time to describe daily routines and talk about their daily lives, as well as be able to narrate events in the past and present	
Technology DT	Students will look at the origins of natural and synthetic fibers and incorporate fabrics into their work. They will also learn about selecting and applying appropriate surface finishes to their work as well as how to test their products against their specification.	
Technology Food	Students will develop mixing, kneading, and chopping skills through designing and making pizza. They will also learn about what non-traditional diets are and how we can prepare food for people who follow these diets. Students will apply this knowledge through preparing a chickpea and spinach curry.	
PE	8A: Handball, Health Related Fitness (HRF), Table Tennis, Gymnastics, Dance 8B: Gymnastics, Dance, Rugby, Football and Outdoor and Adventurous Activities (OAA) 8C: Football, Outdoor and Adventurous Activities (OAA), Netball, Handball, Health Related Fitness (HRF) 8D: Dance, Table Tennis, Gymnastics, Handball 8E: Health Related Fitness (HRF), Gymnastics, Table Tennis, Football Students will continue to explore the three strands of; Healthy Body; developing some advanced practical invasion games skills of passing over distance, receiving the ball one handed or with different parts of the body, outwitting an opponent with different methods, advanced footwork, defending using different techniques and advanced shooting. Plus aesthetic gymnastics skills including advanced skills and vaulting. Healthy Mind; explaining the three stages and benefits of a warmup, the different types of movement available at a joint and the rules, regulations and key points of how to perform skills and tactics across a range of sports Healthy Relationships; students will continue to take on leadership roles in lesson and focus on building empathy for others and resilience of self	
PSHE	Discrimination Human and Animal Rights	

	Discrimination and Extremism
	Racism and Religious Discrimination
	Sexism and Gender
	Wellbeing
	What is Mental Health?
	Coping Strategies
	Mental Illness
	Wellbeing Influences
	First Aid

	Summer Term	
Art	<u>Architecture</u> The theme of Architecture is explored with pupils moving towards the artist Iñaki Aliste Lizarralde, an ex-interior designer turned illustrator. They will re-visit scale and proportion, this time from a bird's-eye view perspective looking closely at the floor plans of their favourite TV Shows. They will create their own pop-up paper sculpture interior room with a focus on individuality.	
Computing	Mobile app development:- Today, there's an app for every possible need. With this unit you can take learners through the design and development process of creating their own mobile app, using App Lab from code.org. Learners will explore design techniques, understand how hardware components can improve user experience and safety, before developing a working app Representations from clay to silicon:- Humans use symbols to record, process and transmit information. Introduce binary digits to your learners as the symbols computers use to perform these tasks and focus on the representation of text and numbers.	
Drama	Monologues- Students will use a script called ASBO to create their own characters. They will consider the effect the teenager's behaviour has on their friends and families. From this, they will create their own characters and learn how to write and perform their own monologue.	Evaluative writing Students will watch professional and amateur performances and learn how to evaluate them in a constructive way. Students will learn they each see things differently and how they write about it with their opinion can influence or challenge other peoples way of thinking.
English	Poetry from around the world Students will study a short anthology of poetry from around the world and explore themes of culture and inequality. Their study will include how different poets use language and structure to create effect as they consider the topic's 'Big Idea': Feminism	The Big Idea Speech Students will study oracy skills and practice drafting and delivering speeches. They will recap the 'Big Ideas' studied across all units this year and select one to form the basis of their own persuasive speech. Taking a strong position, students will plan and deliver a passionate speech on their chosen topic/subject.

Geography	South America - Is this the Most Valuable Continent? In this unit, students explore the continent of South America, beginning with its location and rich history. They study the diverse physical features that shape the continent, with a special focus on Brazil, its culture, natural resources, and the vital role of the Amazon rainforest. The unit examines social and environmental issues such as the story of Chico Mendes, the challenges faced by communities living in favelas, and the lives of indigenous tribes in the Amazon. Students also investigate major development projects like the Belo Monte Dam, explore cultural heritage sites like Machu Picchu and Easter Island, and consider the impact of overconsumption in fragile environments. Throughout the unit, the <i>Earth Heroes</i> series inspires students to think critically about sustainability and their role in protecting the planet.
History	Social Protest in Britain - Investigating the effectiveness of protest in achieving change, examining the fight for the vote in the 19th and early 20th Century. Civil Rights Movement in America - Exploring whether peaceful or militant protests are more effective through the lens of the black equality protests in 20th Century America. Examining the causes of inequality in America and the consequences of the Civil Rights Movement.
Maths	During the final term of year 8, students will build on the foundational concepts introduced throughout year 7 and prior to this at KS2. Key content is revisited regularly through 'Do Now' tasks and prior knowledge checks, helping to reinforce learning and ensure long-term retention. The units outlined below are thoughtfully sequenced to support a progressive and coherent development of knowledge over time. Unit 10: Calculate basic probabilities and understand the probability scale through use of tables, grids and venn diagrams. Understand mutually exclusive and independent events and calculate theoretical probabilities. Unit 11: To understand and apply the laws of indices, including multiplication and division of powers, and to interpret and use standard form. Unit 12: To calculate the area and perimeter of a range of shapes, including circles and compound shapes. Unit 13: To perform and describe reflections, rotations, translations and enlargements accurately. Unit 14: To calculate missing side lengths in right-angled triangles using Pythagoras' Theorem.
Music	Patterns in Motion Students examine how repetition and pattern are used in African and Minimalist music. Through performance, listening, and composition activities they explore ostinato, texture, and gradual musical development, creating their own pattern-based compositions.
RE	What beliefs are central to Christianity? What is the point of my life? Thematic

Science	Organisms Students build on what they learnt about in the year 7 cells topic and learn about organs within the digestive and respiratory systems.	Earth's Resources The three types of rock and the rock cycle are studied, linking to work undertaken in Geography. Students then study reactivity of metals, displacement and extraction of metals. Production of carbon dioxide by humans, climate change and recycling issues conclude this module
Spanish	Students will know: How the word “para” is used. They will also know what demonstratives and comparatives are. They will also know what the irregular verb “ir” looks like when used in past tense and how to use it. Students will know how to: Use “para”, demonstratives and comparatives to be able to compare things. They will also know how to use the past tense of the verb “ir” to describe where people went.	
Technology DT	DT and Food will rotate in February	
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PSHE	Digital Literacy Keeping Safe Online Online Communication Social Media Gambling Hooks Fake News Identity and Relationships Sexual Orientation Healthy Relationships Sex and Consent Sexting Stalking
PE	All classes will study the following sports this term; Athletics, Cricket, Rounders and Tennis Healthy Body; practical athletics skills, including advanced techniques to generate power into jumps and throws and pacing to run for distance and introduction of more advanced practical skills of batting, bowling, fielding, serving, forehand and backhand shots and rallying within different sports. Healthy Mind; explaining the short-term effects of exercise and key points of how to perform correct techniques within different athletics events explaining the long-term effects of exercise and key points of how to perform correct technique within rounders, cricket and tennis Healthy Relationships; students will focus on the qualities of developing communication when feeding back to a partner on technique and quality of cooperation within team sports and when working with others 1-1