



DURHAM JOHNSTON
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL
— DARE TO BE WISE —

Year 8

Curriculum Overview *Half Term 1*

Dear Parent/Carer,

In the following booklet you should find an overview of what your child will be studying this half term in school. We've included key details on what they will be looking at in each subject, how they'll be assessed and what they might do to further develop their understanding. The aim is for this to make it easier for you to work with the school supporting your child with their work.

All lessons last for one hour. In Year 8, students study the following subjects:

- **English, Maths and Science** – **three** lessons per week per subject
- **Geography, History, Physical Education, First language option and Second language option** – **two** lessons per week per subject
- **Art, Computing, Design Technology, Food & Textiles, Music, and Religious Education** – **one** lesson per week per subject

The information for each subject is categorised as follows:

Topics / tasks: This is the overview of the topics Year 8 students will be covering this half term.

Content and skills: This explains what areas students will be looking at, and the skills they will be developing during the half term.

Assessment: This explains how students will be assessed on their understanding of this topic.

Stretch and challenge: This gives suggestions of how students can explore this area in more detail if they wish.

Art

Topics / tasks:	Identity/ Portraiture- basic drawing sketching techniques, leading to portrait paintings.	Styles of portraiture- how a portrait can capture the essence of a person beyond realism.
Content and skills:	Drawing & Photography - How to map guidelines and reference points in achieving a lifelike portrait. - The grid system introduced. - The use of mark making in describing light, contrast, texture, form, and shape. - Expressive drawing and exploring a range of styles. - Sketching from life and using photography to capture natural moments at home. - The nature of the project will gradually move from portraits to a wider interpretation of identity and how people can be portrayed or illustrated.	Annotation - Describing imaginatively work presented to them and in reviewing their own artwork. - Referring to the formal elements of art & design. - Communicating clearly, effectively, and imaginatively. - Using a range of specialist vocabulary. - Using adjectives to describe the properties of the materials - Using adverbs to describe how the materials were used - Using verbs to show the feelings they get from the art effect.
Assessment:	Practical work is reviewed and commented on throughout the lesson. Basic technical skills will be assessed, but not over the imaginative and creative. Control of materials and understanding of the formal elements mapped.	The creation of GCSE style investigation pages, with image of artwork in the centre of the page surrounded by student annotation.
	Students will create portfolios of work and they will complete self- assessment tasks responding to the teacher's developmental comments. An electronic marks book will map the level of ability in a range of processes/materials and this will inform their school report for art & design.	
Stretch and challenge:	Creating a more extensive portfolio of work, challenging themselves in the subject matter drawn. Taking greater risks and exploring the use of texture and space through more creative drawing techniques.	Further reading by exploring art museum websites and identifying artists the student likes. To then create outcomes and annotation based on these new artists without teacher direction.

Computing

Topics / tasks:	The development of technology and how to market it (Business link) Digital Imagery The influence of the media
Content and skills:	• Awareness, be able to discuss their ideas, research, plan and showcase their ideas – focussing on new technologies. • Understand the properties of digital images and how/why they are used • Recognise bias, refine searches, and select key information. • Present in a way which is suitable for both audience and purpose. • Extended writing and research skills
Assessment:	• Baseline test /26 (Hardware, Software Digital images, Web development & The Micro:bit) • Teacher assessment D/S/E (extended writing task)
Stretch and challenge:	Use your knowledge to write a speech as part of the public speaking competition. Write a blog to change attitudes / inform. Look at technology in Business and produce a report on a successful product launch, considering why they were so effective/profitable (For example - Apple are an industry leader and have used differentiation well). Develop your skills: https://www.photopea.com/tuts/ (a free alternative to Photoshop)

Design Technology

Design Technology projects depend on the rooming and class rotation. Over the year, students will cover all of the following:

Topics / tasks:	Small scale storage / Mechanical systems and sustainability / Phone holder		
Content and skills:	Depending on rooming, students will complete one of the following units:		
	Unit 1: Small scale storage Students will design and develop a small scale storage device through sketching, modelling and CAD. Once laser cut, students will use a hot wire strip heater to bend it into shape. Students will also explore polymers and different ways in which they can be processed.	Unit 2: Mechanical systems and sustainability Students will investigate, levers, linkages and mechanisms. They will produce a variety of mechanical iterations to solve problems. Students will then explore non-renewable and renewable energy sources and use this information to design and develop a sustainable toy	Unit 3: Phone holder Students will use a variety of workshop tools to cut and shape acrylic by hand. They will also cut aluminium rods and cut internal and external threads so that the phone holder can be assembled.
Assessment:	• Unit 1: Work in booklets will be assessed once every 6 weeks with consistent verbal feedback given in lessons. Students will also complete a 50 question test at the end of the unit. • Unit 2: Work in booklets will be assessed once every 6 weeks with consistent verbal feedback given in lessons. Students will also complete a 50 question test at the end of the unit. • Unit 3: Correct use of tools and equipment is assessed through verbal feedback.		
Stretch and challenge:	• Find a metal product and a plastic version of the product (i.e. a spoon) Investigate the environmental impact of both. Which is more sustainable? Why? • Students could visit www.technologystudent.com to investigate the content from the unit they are studying.		

English

Topics / tasks:	<i>Journey's End</i> by R.C. Sherriff	Dystopia Writing
Content and skills:	Reading • Social, historical, political and literary contexts of WW1 through the play <i>Journey's End</i> and the poems 'Who's for the game' by Jessie Pope and 'Dulce et Decorum Est' by Wilfred Owen. • Studying the character development of key characters: Osborne, Raleigh and Stanhope. • Studying the dramatic genre and methods used to create tension. • Inferring and deducing meaning and viewpoint in a text • Selecting and applying relevant evidence • Communicating clearly and structuring responses	Writing • Writing to describe and narrate within the dystopian genre. • Studying extracts from a range of dystopian authors including George Orwell, Ray Bradbury, Aldous Huxley, and Suzanne Collins. • Using vocabulary, linguistic methods, sentence types and punctuation. • Developing and structuring a range of imaginative ideas.
Assessment:	Complete a comprehension style test on the play, answering a range of questions, assessing different skills, including an essay style question.	Writing the opening to a dystopian story.
Stretch and challenge:	Studying a wider range of WW1 literature such as the following war poets: Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, Edna St Vincent Millay, Harold Begbie, Robert Laurence Binyon.	Read dystopian novels by a range of authors for example: <i>The Hunger Games</i> trilogy by Suzanne Collins <i>The Maze Runner</i> series by James Dashner <i>Divergent</i> series by Veronica Roth <i>The Wind on Fire</i> trilogy by William Nicholson <i>Floodland</i> by Marcus Sedgewick <i>Exodus</i> trilogy by Julie Bertanga

Food & Textiles

Topics / tasks:	Development of further skills and knowledge in Food Preparation & Nutrition and Design Technology-Textiles	
Content and skills:	Depending on rooming, students will either start/have started a Food Preparation and Nutrition project or will begin/have begun a Textiles project, completing half a year in each subject by the end of year 8.	
	Food Preparation and Nutrition	Textiles
	- Recap students understanding of health and safety in the cooking and preparation of food. - Specific dishes have been chosen for students to cook to build upon the skills gained in year 7, to challenge them and give them a wide variety of skills and to develop their independence of these skills. - Students will learn a range of theory topics: hydration, food waste, scientific processes that happen during cooking e.g. gelatinisation	- Recap on the safety of using the equipment in the Textiles room- students use a wider range of equipment in year 8, e.g. the iron. - Design and create a textiles product for a specific target customer with consideration to our community. - Students will carry out an iterative project that explores forces applied to materials. - Students will learn a range of theory topics: what is iterative design? How to analyse and respond to a project brief as well as developing their research and product analysis skills
Assessment:	There will be a variety of assessments on written work and practical outcomes. After 8 weeks (approx.) students complete a written test on the knowledge covered. Students' work will also be monitored throughout each lesson, to ensure that students are working to the best of their ability.	
Stretch and challenge:	Students are encouraged to adapt projects and recipes using the knowledge gained throughout the completion of their projects. Student should also access additional Home Learning Tasks via their class team, to further their knowledge in this subject.	

French

Topics / tasks:	Countries and transport
Content and skills:	Students will learn the names of different countries and how to say different nationalities. They will also learn different modes of transport and how to describe a visit. To do this they will revise the future tense from Year 7 and learn how to use the perfect tense to talk about the past.
Assessment:	Students will be assessed by regular vocabulary and grammar tests. There will also be a formal listening assessment.
Stretch and challenge:	Students can research different places to visit.

Geography

Topics / tasks:	Introduction to World Geography	Population
Content and skills:	Students will be learning about what world geography is and why it is important. Students will develop their knowledge of where places are in the world.	Students will be learning about how and why the global population has increased, whilst developing their ability to analyse trends in population change using a range of graphs and maps. Students will develop the skill to interpret population pyramids to examine the population structure of different countries. Students will contrast the causes, benefits and problems of an ageing population in the UK and Japan. Students will develop their essay writing skills by investigating the different reasons for and impacts of an ageing population. Students will practise forming clear judgements, explaining points and supporting points with evidence. They will learn to compare different points and write counter arguments.
Assessment:	A test on the location of key human and physical geography features on a world map.	A population key terms test. Writing an essay on the impact of an ageing population. Students will answer the following question: <i>"Ageing populations are a major issue and create more problems than benefits."</i> To what extent do you agree with this statement? They must outline a range of benefits and problems, explain and support points with evidence before justifying their final decision.
Stretch and challenge:	Explore the topic further by completing the online map quizzes on the Sporcle Website: www.sporcle.com/games/category/geography Consolidate and extend your knowledge by completing the world games challenges on the following website: https://world-geography-games.com/	Research other countries with a growing (e.g. Nigeria) or shrinking (e.g. Russia) population and examine the causes and impacts. The websites of the CIA world fact book and Gapminder are good places to start: www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/ www.gapminder.org/

German

Topics / tasks:	Family and friends
Content and skills:	Consolidation of knowledge of areas taught in Year 7. By the end of this topic, students will be able to talk and write about themselves and members of their family, describing their character and their physical appearance. Students will learn how to pick out key information when listening, how to learn vocabulary lists, how to recognise cognates in reading and how to use a variety of vocabulary and the present tense in writing tasks.
Assessment:	Students will be assessed by regular vocabulary and grammar tests. There will also be a formal listening assessment on the family topic.
Stretch and challenge:	Learning more vocabulary on the topic and apply their knowledge of the declension system in writing tasks.

History

Topics / tasks:	Henry VIII, his coronation, wealth and marriage.	The English Reformation.
Content and skills:	Students will be learning about how and why Henry became king after his father united England and his brother died. We will study Henry's personal character Students will develop their source analysis skills. They will focus on improving their history writing skills. Students will practice forming clear judgements, explaining points and supporting points with evidence.	Students will be learning about change in religion in 15th century England. They will learn about the various reasons why Henry VIII converted the nation from Catholic to Protestant. Students will develop their source analysis skills and analyse interpretations. They will learn to judge the utility of a historian's interpretation. They will use their own knowledge to judge the relevance and accuracy of each claim in an interpretation.
Assessment:	Writing a source analysis. Students will answer the following question: How useful is this source for understanding why Henry VIII broke from Rome? They must judge the accuracy, validity and convincing nature of Thomas Cromwell's monastic reports, and explain their judgement with evidence.	
Stretch and challenge:	Researching the life and governance of Henry VIII, particularly before the Reformation. Meanwhile in Durham... Meanwhile elsewhere...	Researching Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation in Europe Read the following articles: RMG Reasons for Reformation HistoryExtra on the Reformation www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zrpcwmn/revision/3

Latin

Topics / tasks:	Daily life in the town of Pompeii	The nominative & accusative cases, declensions & basic verb endings.
Content and skills:	How evidence from Pompeii helps us understand what it would have been like to live in Roman times; including daily routines, houses, working life, the forum & the layout of the town.	How to read Latin aloud; how to use the endings (rather than word order) to work out the meaning of a Latin sentence; learning to be flexible in translating into natural English; understanding the links between Latin root words and English derivations.
Assessment:	A translation assessment & regular vocabulary tests, as well as work done in class and for homework.	
Stretch and challenge:	Reading about Pompeii. There is a selection of suitable books available for students to borrow.	

Maths

Topics / tasks:	Simplifying ratio and sharing in a ratio, circumference of a circle. Direct proportion, conversion graphs, exchange rate. Similar shapes, scale drawings. Working with fractions, simplifying, multiplication and division.
Content and skills:	Review of skills learned in Year 7 and extension to Year 8 topics. Application of skills to new contexts including algebraic expressions and real life problems. Students will also develop skills in reasoning, applying and problem solving
Assessment:	Half term assessment 1 on work covered in the first 5 weeks.
Stretch and challenge:	• Completing extra work using Sparx Maths and Corbett Maths websites. • Completing enrichment tasks on the Nrich website: https://nrich.maths.org/

Music

Topics / tasks:	Musical Tags (Leitmotifs)
Content and skills:	• Exploring the technique of combining musical features to portray characters, settings and emotions • Analysing tags across musical genres
Assessment:	Creating a 'Musical Tag' to represent a character, and completing assessed listening activities which will require students to respond to existing musical tags and make compositional suggestions to a character brief
Stretch and challenge:	• Researching the history of the origins of the Leitmotif in the music of Richard Wagner. • Exploring BBC Bitesize resources on the Leitmotif

Physical Education

Topics / tasks:	Fitness activities and invasion game skills.
Content and skills:	• Improving levels of cardio-vascular fitness, core strength and speed. • Developing invasion games skills including movement with and without the ball.
Assessment:	A timed cross-country run and a conditioned game.
Stretch and challenge:	Attending extra-curricular clubs and participating in sports clubs outside school

Religious Education

Topics / tasks:	Making Ethical Decisions
Content and skills:	Pupils will have the opportunity to explore a range of ethical issues including the Trolley Cart Problem posed by Philippa Foot. They will learn about deontological and teleological ethical approaches, the meaning of conscience and other key ethical principles such as the Principle of Utility and the Sanctity of Life. Religious approaches to ethical decision-making will also be evaluated. Pupils will develop skills of analysis, evaluation and critical thinking. The nature of the subject content will also develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness.
Assessment:	(a) A key concept vocabulary test. (b) A timed piece of extended writing.
Stretch and challenge:	Reading: <i>Introducing Philosophy of Religion</i> by Dilwyn Hunt (published by Nelson Thornes), <i>The Puzzle of Ethics</i> by Peter Vardy

Science

Topics / tasks:	Food and nutrition Combustion Fluids	
Content and skills:	Knowledge Food and nutrition This unit looks at the main components in the human diet and why they are needed. The digestive system is also covered in detail, and the idea of enzymes is introduced. Combustion This unit uses the context of combustion to cover combustion and oxidation reactions, including those of hydrocarbons, metals and non-metals. The idea of an exothermic reaction is introduced and there is also an investigation activity looking at the pollution of the air by the products of fossil fuel combustion. There are opportunities to discuss the impact of global warming and methods for controlling carbon dioxide emissions. Fluids This unit looks at changes of state and then goes on to look at fluids and some of their effects, including pressure, floating and sinking, and drag.	Skills • Calculating means • Identifying anomalous results • Testing for carbon dioxide • Understanding how scientific theories are developed • Spotting and explaining trends • Using scientific models. • Practical skills development • Recognising and using practical equipment safely.
Assessment:	Regular retrieval tasks throughout the taught units. 15-mark teacher marked end of unit assessment. 3 x synoptic assessments at key points in the year.	
Stretch and challenge:	By completing the crest award opportunity in science club.	

Spanish

Topics / tasks:	Revision of vocabulary & grammar from Y7 taster lessons. Town and local area topic
Content and skills:	Students will learn about home and local area as well as countries and nationalities. Grammar will include present tense of regular verbs, the future with going to and opinions with reasons. They will also learn how to pick out key information when reading, how to recognise cognates in reading, and how to translate from Spanish to English. Students will also be able to write spontaneously from memory using vocabulary and grammar covered in the unit.
Assessment:	Students will be assessed by regular vocabulary and grammar tests. There will also be a formal reading assessment on the town and local area topic.
Stretch and challenge:	Researching Spanish speaking countries, famous sites and attractions, and famous people from those countries