

18 September 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been a pleasure to welcome students back after the summer break, and it has been an enjoyable first two weeks in school. As we begin the new academic year, I would like to update you on what your child will learn in school. Attached with this letter is a curriculum update that briefly outlines what students are studying in each subject this half term.

I would also like to draw your attention to our school website. You will find a series of subject tiles in the curriculum section of the website under curriculum on the drop-down menu. If you click on one of these tiles, it will take you to the subject page, where you will find an overview of the curriculum and a link to the learning journeys for each year group. The learning journey maps out what your child will study throughout the year; it shows how topics link together and where assessments are.

Students have ongoing assessments through each unit of study, such as homework, extended pieces of classwork, knowledge and vocabulary tests and end-of-topic tests. Together with more formal tests conducted in lessons between 6 - 17 November, these assessments will enable teachers to assess your child's progress. You will receive an Autumn term report on 7 December.

If you want to support your child at home with their learning, high-quality free resources such as BBC Bitesize, Seneca Learning and study videos on YouTube are an excellent place to start. Additionally, most good publishers produce a range of high-quality study and revision guides for key stages three and four. However, one of the most effective ways to support your child is to talk to them regularly about their learning. Asking children to explain what they have learned helps them to recall and think about information, which aids retention in their long-term memory. Other good ways for children to embed their learning involve summarising information in bullet point lists, making mind maps, flashcards or quick quizzes and testing themselves or having a go at additional practice questions and reviewing model answers.

The table below provides a helpful guide for the time that students should spend working at home. Students will spend some time completing homework set by the class teacher; the remainder should be independent study.

Year Group	Per Day	Per Subject per week
7 and 8	45 minutes to 1 hour	30 minutes
9	1 – 2 hours	40 minutes
10 and 11	1.5 – 2.5 hours	60 minutes

It is essential to make a space at home for your child to work away from distractions such as televisions, game consoles, mobile phones and other electronic devices. You can further support your child by creating a study timetable to identify times when they can work each day, planned around your family commitments.

I hope you will find this helpful in supporting your child's learning at home. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

Yours sincerely,



**Mr. M. McAuley**  
Deputy Headteacher



# Year 8 Curriculum Update

## Half Term 1

### Art

Year 8 students will be introduced into Illustration Art. They will develop an understanding of different types of illustration Art. Students will be introduced into the Illustration artist Jon Burgerman. They will develop their research skills when discovering facts about the artist skills, media and techniques. They will create their own artist copies using the same media as Jon Burgerman. Compulsory homework 1 is linked to Jon Burgerman's typography skills.

### Design Technology

Year 8 students complete a carousel programme of study focusing on each Design and Technology area whilst developing skills from Year 7.

Textiles – Romero Britto inspired cushion focusing on batik, dye techniques and use of the sewing machine.

Graphics – Card and gift collection using Quentin Blake as inspiration. Students will develop drawing skills and produce repeated pattern gift wrap. Students will also learn how to use Adobe Illustrator.

Food and Nutrition – Food choice and provenance project where students will learn where food comes from whilst cooking a range of products.

3D Design – Wire sculpture project inspired by sea or sky. Students will develop skills using hand tools and machinery whilst working with new materials.

### Computing

Year 8 students will delve deeper into the world of Computer Science by studying the physical components that make up a computer system. They will gain knowledge about the roles and functions of the Central Processing Unit (CPU), memory, storage devices, as well as various input and output devices, enhancing their understanding of how these components work together to facilitate computing tasks.

### English

Year 8 will focus on a term-long topic of 'Struggle for Survival.' In this first half term, students will study conflict poetry including poetry from World War One and current conflicts.

### Geography

In geography, year 8 will study coastal processes, features and issues, learning about how coastlines change over time and the impacts this has on human activity,

### History

In history, students study the English reformation; who Henry VIII was, his divorce from Catherine of Aragon, how the church changed and what the Dissolution of the monasteries was.

### Mathematics

Students begin the year consolidating their work on number and number systems. Students will investigate the products of prime number and be introduced to standard form and practice using the four mathematical operations with numbers in standard form. Following their work on number and calculation pupils will then begin an introduction to probability and understanding risk.

### Modern Foreign Languages

In French and Spanish this half term students will learn how to introduce themselves, talk about days, and months, birthdays and ages, colours, pets and school. In unit 2 students will learn to talk about their family and begin learning how to use the past and present tense.

### Music

Once students have developed the core skills and musical knowledge in year 7, they will be expected to develop their technical abilities in year 8 and apply their critical thinking skills to contextualising different musical genres in various cultural, social, religious and political scenarios by looking at Reggae music and the themes of religion and rebellion as well as Jazz and Blues to explore race and equality. Students will develop their theoretical knowledge with the inclusion of reading music in the bass clef and introducing music with a greater number of accidentals (#'s and b's). Students will develop their technical abilities on keyboards by performing separate right and left hand parts simultaneously. This is deliberately timed so that students can build confidence and develop a range of techniques, performance and composition skills in both solo and ensemble settings. Students will be able to appraise music in more depth using a wider range of key vocabulary and be able to assess how they can make improvements themselves as part of their self-evaluations.

### Physical Education

The students will undertake activities depending upon which group they are in and which facility they are assigned. The activities will be from the following: football, netball, badminton, rugby. The students will continue to develop their ability to perform (doing), their knowledge of the activity (knowing) and how well they work individually and, in a team, (interacting).

### Religious Studies

Students will study a topic on historical discipleship, learning about the call of the first disciples, sainthood, martyrdom and the role of the Pope.

### Science

Year 8 students will continue to develop their scientific knowledge and skills learning about chemical reactions. They will study the reactions of acids and alkalis and the many reactions involving metals and non-metals. Towards the end of this half term, students will start a topic on electricity which they will continue after half term.