

# YEAR 8 CURRICULUM LETTER: AUTUMN 2023



Welcome to our Autumn term Curriculum Letter. There are plenty of activities for students to get involved in this term and many departments will be running exciting activities in the run up to Christmas. Watch out for the Extra-Curricular Clubs list - out next week.

More general information about the curriculum can be found [here](#).

The departments that teach your child have contributed below to let you know what students will be studying this term.

## Art

Students will be completing a Renaissance Portrait project. They will develop an appreciation and understanding of Renaissance portraiture, create a photographic mock-up of a given Renaissance portrait and produce a painting of the above mock-up exploring colour, tone and paint-brush control. Renaissance/Post Renaissance Art - Project Intent:

- Develop an understanding, appreciation and mastery of Renaissance developments and methods in the depiction of pictorial space (1-point perspective, 2-point perspective, 3-point perspective).
- To understand other complimentary methods of depicting pictorial space - Interposition, Relative Size, Scale) through both drawing and photographic investigations.
- To produce a final piece that utilises the above methods in a considered and insightful way.

## Computer Science

In computer science, students will start by developing the work they started in year 7 on E-safety and then studying the law around the use of IT followed by developing their understanding of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning. Students will complete their work on AI and Machine Learning and then move onto developing web-pages using HTML

## Careers

As part of their PSHE lessons, where they will learn about Professional Skills and Careers Development.

## Drama

'Commedia Dell'Arte'

Pupils will learn about the history of Commedia dell'arte and use stock characters, improvisation, masks and stylised acting to create their own improvised scenario. Towards Christmas they will be looking at physical theatre, specifically Frantic Assembly and using some of their warmups and techniques to create their own movement patterns.

## English

Pupils begin the year by developing their analysis of poetry, building on their understanding of poetic techniques to develop an analytical approach to a range of poems from different time periods. They will deepen their understanding by experimenting with different language and structure techniques in their own writing as well as learning to structure more sustained analytical responses culminating in the exploration of William Blake's The Chimney Sweep.

After half term, pupils will begin to read Markus Zusak's The Book Thief focussing on ideas of historical context. Pupils will analyse how Zusak incorporates the history of the Holocaust and Nazi Germany into his novel, the importance of narrative perspective through the narrator Death, and the effect of Zusak's language choices on modern day audiences.

## Food & Nutrition

Students will build on health and safety knowledge, food poisoning and nutrition. They will begin to use electrical equipment and expand their knowledge of kitchen appliances. Students will look at how bread is made. They will be able to read food labels and be able to make healthy food choices. They will be making American pancakes, fruit crumble and macaroni cheese.

## Geography

This term, year 8 students are investigating the rise of the megacities and the increasing urban world that we have living in. They will be analysing the impacts of the millions of people that live in cities around the world in places such as the slums of Mumbai.

Students will then become the meteorologists of the future as they seek to understand how our weather is created. They will study the difference between weather and climate, have first-hand experience of how we measure the weather and then investigate how the UK's weather is becoming more unpredictable and 'extreme'.

## History

Students will be looking at the history in the time of the Stuarts, starting by looking at whether the Gunpowder plot was a government conspiracy.

## Mathematics

Students will cover the following topics: Laws of indices, Standard Form, Calculating and estimating, Angles and Shapes.

Algebra - solving equations, expanding and factorising, simplifying expressions. Analysing data.

## MFL - French

Students will complete a topic called: Les vacances

They will learn how to:

- describe different types of holidays
- explain where they stay
- explain what they like to do on holiday and why using a variety of verbs in the present tense
- talk about the weather

They will then move onto describing and giving opinions on school uniform and discussing fashion preferences. They will recap adjective agreement, which was studied in year 7 and students will learn how to use comparatives and practise justifying opinions.

## MFL - German

In German, students will complete a topic called: Hier spricht man Deutsch

They will learn how to:

- Say what hobbies people do in German speaking countries
- Say what food and drink people consume in German speaking countries
- Compare this with your own life and the lives of English people
- Learn more about German, Austrian and Swiss culture
- Use a wider range of verbs in the present tense

'Festivals' - students have been learning to use the present tense. They will transfer and build on this by learning to describe what they normally do on various special occasions.

## Music

Students will study the Blues. They will develop an understanding of the historical significance of blues and compose a 12 bar blues.

**ENSEMBLE SKILLS** Pupils will work together in small groups to produce a band performance of a Christmas song. They will have the experience of learning an instrument and how it feels to be a musician through developing their own personalised learning and understanding of how a rehearsal process with others works.

## PE

Students in year 8 rotate every 3 weeks which gives them 6 lessons per activity. So each group will be taking part in 2 of the following:

Students will explore a range of dance movements using steps, gestures, formations, body shapes, contact work, and contrasts in dynamic and rhythmic patterning. Students will demonstrate creativity by incorporating control, rhythm, timing and aesthetics into sequences around the dance idea of Guernica with its cross-curricular links with history.

**Health Related Fitness** - students will further develop their understanding of the importance of warming up and devise their own warm-up. Students will re-cap how to take their own pulse

and learn about the significance of heart rate and movement. Students will learn some of the components of fitness and how to test them. Students will participate in a variety of methods of training.

**Hockey** - students will focus on developing attacking and defending strategies and replicating techniques required in competitive games. They will work on development of the ability to perform and influence a game or pressurised situation. In all games activities, students are encouraged to think about use of core skills as part of tactics to outwit the opposition. Students will develop confidence in movement and test mental capacity through scoring and officiating games.

**Netball** - focus on developing team attacking and defending strategies and techniques using a set of core skills. Students will experience a range of skill variations with intent to outwit the opposition. Students will develop a sound knowledge of positions and rules surrounding footwork and contact. Students will begin to analyse performances and adapt elements to improve.

## PSHE

Students will cover a range of topics including:  
Equality and Diversity, LGBTQAI+, Advocacy, Digital Resilience, Healthy Friendships, Managing Conflict/Peer Pressure, Digital Safety, Mental Health and Positivity

## Religion, Philosophy and Ethics

In year 8 RP&E students start the year with a unit "What difference might it make to be an atheist in Britain today?" focusing on reasons for the increase in non-religious views in society and how and why non-religious beliefs might impact on a person's life.

Students will look at how people make moral decisions. This links with religious and non-religious beliefs that they have already covered as well as laying a foundation for future religions we will study.

## Science

In **Biology** students will study:

- **Respiration**
  - aerobic and anaerobic respiration in living organisms, including the breakdown of organic molecules to enable all the other chemical processes necessary for life
  - a word summary for aerobic respiration
  - the process of anaerobic respiration in humans and micro-organisms, including fermentation, and a word summary for anaerobic respiration
  - the differences between aerobic and anaerobic respiration in terms of the reactants, the products formed and the implications for the organism.
- **Human gas exchange**
  - the structure and functions of the gas exchange system in humans, including adaptations to function
  - the mechanism of breathing to move air in and out of the lungs, using a pressure model to explain the movement of gases, including simple measurements of lung volume
  - the impact of exercise, asthma and smoking on the human gas exchange system

- **The skeletal and muscular system**

- the structure and functions of the human skeleton, to include support, protection, movement and making blood cells
- biomechanics - the interaction between skeleton and muscles, including the measurement of force exerted by different muscles
- the function of muscles and examples of antagonistic muscles

This unit builds on the KS1 and KS2 curriculum as students continue to build up specialist vocabulary, develop understanding of scientific method and apply mathematical knowledge to their understanding of science. During Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, students will have studied the basic needs of humans for survival (air). They will also have studied the impact of exercise on the way our bodies function and have identified that humans have skeletons and muscles for movement (such as breathing). The unit leads on to parts of the GCSE Biology curriculum where students learn more about adaptation of the alveoli for gas exchange (4.1.3.1), aerobic and anaerobic respiration (4.4.2.1), response to exercise (4.4.2.2) and the effect of smoking on some non-communicable diseases (4.2.2.6).

### Chemistry:

In Chemistry they will be looking at the building blocks of all things: atoms and elements.

Periodic Table:

This module builds up on students' prior knowledge of atoms, elements and compounds. Students will learn about the main principles underpinning Mendeleev's periodic table, how elements are organised in groups and periods and how they can be classified as metals and non-metals. They will link their position on their periodic table with their physical and chemical properties. Students will revisit and expand on this content in years 10 and 11 when they study the periodic table in more detail, and when they study the key concepts in structure and bonding.

### Physics:

In physics, students will develop their understanding of forces, a topic they have done some work on in Year 7, by looking at turning forces and pressure.

Following on from the work that year 8 carried out in year 7 about energy and methods of producing electricity, students will develop knowledge of simple circuits. This is a very practical topic and students will make and test their own circuits and gain knowledge of electric current, potential difference and resistance. This topic is built on in year 10 and forms the foundations of students' understanding of electricity.

## Textiles

We have some changes in the timetabling of textiles this year as I will see all student for 1 hour every two weeks for the whole academic year -instead of the rotation system they became used to in year 7. Over the year we will be learning more about working with tricky fabrics and how stitch and print techniques vary according to fabric choice. The Autumn Term will be spent learning about knitted fabrics and using fleece and/or Jersey to make a winter hat.



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