

Dear Parents and Carers,

As your child enters Year 9, the final year of Key Stage 3, they will be challenged to apply the skills and knowledge gained in Years 7 and 8 to more complex, independent, and thoughtful work. This year encourages pupils to think critically, communicate effectively, and prepare for the transition to GCSE and beyond.

Below is an outline of the curriculum that your child will be studying in Year 9:

Art & Design

Pupils produce work in response to the themes of Still-life and The Figure. They study artists such as Cézanne, Morandi, Rodin, and Degas, while refining observational drawing skills from real-life and artist influences. They explore proportions of the human figure, applying expressive techniques to show movement and character. Pupils use a range of tones, layering, and modification approaches, while also researching and evaluating the work of set artists and their own.

CPE

Lessons focus on Relationships, Health and Wellbeing, and Living in the Wider World. Pupils study a wide range of issues including: the LGBTQ+ community, domestic violence, consent, abusive relationships, diversity, peer pressure, drugs and harmful substances, alcohol, body image, safe sex, discrimination, social media management, human rights, personal finance, work skills, knife crime, and employability. Pupils also complete a module in RE which introduces philosophy and ethics, exploring moral dilemmas and debates from history.

Design & Technology (Food, Resistant Materials & Textiles)

- **Food:** Pupils design and make a variety of family meals, exploring food choice, nutrition, and the function of ingredients. They focus on quality presentation and precision, encouraged to practise at home to refine independence. Links are made to GCSE specifications and careers in food industries.
- **Resistant Materials:** Pupils research, design, and produce marketable products with packaging. They use CAD software to manipulate images and produce accurate drawings, while working independently with specialist tools and equipment. Pupils also evaluate designs in relation to sustainability and consumer choice.
- **Textiles:** Pupils focus on a culture capital project, considering the needs of different groups and sustainable design. They experiment with recycled materials and decorative techniques, producing creative and functional outcomes. They also study technological developments in textiles and careers in fashion.

Drama

Pupils create, perform, and evaluate drama with a focus on complex characters and inner conflict. They refine vocal techniques, using intonation, accent, and emphasis purposefully, while experimenting with exaggerated and synchronised movement. Collaborative performances encourage communication, creativity, and empathy. By the end of Year 9, pupils will have developed confidence, communication skills, and emotional intelligence.

English

Pupils study a wide range of texts, including a novel, a Shakespeare play, poetry, and non-fiction. They develop essay writing skills, analysing context, language, and characterisation with greater sophistication. Pupils also create their own texts, planning, drafting, and editing to improve technical accuracy and creativity. Through discussion-based tasks, pupils build confidence as independent thinkers and communicators, while continuing to enjoy and appreciate literature.

Literacy

Pupils following Literacy instead of German continue to strengthen reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. They study a wide range of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and plays, deepening vocabulary and grammar while refining spelling and punctuation. Lessons complement the English curriculum and help pupils prepare for GCSE through both analytical and creative tasks.

Modern Foreign Languages

- **French:** Pupils consolidate language skills through topics such as Media, School and Future Plans, Health, and Holidays. They continue to refine grammar and vocabulary, becoming more confident in spontaneous speaking and writing with accuracy. Pupils develop language strategies, applying knowledge independently to communicate effectively.
- **German:** In their second year of study, pupils learn to discuss past holidays, shopping, food, health, and leisure. Vocabulary and translation skills are extended to longer passages, including opinion and justification, across a range of tenses.

Geography

Pupils build their ability to 'think like geographers,' comparing similarities and differences across places and scales. They complete independent enquiries, such as whether tsunamis are the most dangerous tectonic hazard or whether sustainable living is achievable. Writing is extended to 'to what extent' questions and evaluation. Pupils refine their use of maps, ICT, graphical, and investigative skills, while critically evaluating evidence to reach effective conclusions.

History

Pupils explore key events of the 20th century, including the World Wars, Vietnam and the Cold War, the Civil Rights Movement, Women's Suffrage, and the Holocaust. They focus on enquiry, causation, change, and significance, applying historical skills to evaluate impact. Pupils also investigate a significant event from the 20th century, consolidating the knowledge and skills developed throughout Key Stage 3.

Mathematics

Pupils consolidate and extend their mathematical knowledge, developing efficient methods for multi-step calculations, including index notation, standard form, bounds, quadratic patterns, algebraic fractions, simultaneous equations, inequalities, and proof. They apply compound measures (e.g., speed, rates of change) and solve geometric problems using trigonometry and Pythagoras. Data handling develops with cumulative frequency graphs and histograms. Opportunities for extension and support are provided.

Music

Pupils continue to develop performing, composing, and listening skills. They perform confidently in solo and ensemble settings, playing with fluency and accuracy. Composition tasks encourage creativity using a range of structures and genres, while listening develops discrimination and appreciation across musical styles, including the work of significant composers and performers.

Physical Education

Pupils become more confident and expert across a range of sports, refining techniques and applying strategies in competitive contexts. They analyse their own performances, identifying improvements, and continue to build confidence, resilience, and interest in lifelong physical activity.

Reading

As part of our commitment to securing the best outcomes for all pupils, we have introduced dedicated reading lessons into the Year 8 and 9 curriculum. Pupils now have one hour every fortnight timetabled for reading using *Sparx Reader*. During these sessions, pupils also engage with a range of non-fiction

texts covering diverse and relevant topics, followed by class discussions designed to develop pupils' oracy skills.

These lessons offer a wide range of benefits:

- **Improved reading comprehension** through exposure to varied texts.
- **Enhanced vocabulary acquisition**, supporting better expression and understanding.
- **Stronger literacy skills**, which underpin success across all subjects.
- **Greater confidence in speaking and listening**, thanks to structured discussion activities.
- **Increased engagement with real-world topics**, helping pupils connect learning to life beyond the classroom.

By embedding reading into the curriculum in this way, we aim to foster a lifelong love of learning and ensure pupils are well-equipped for academic success and future opportunities.

Resource Base for Deaf Pupils

Pupils accessing the Resource Base receive additional tutorials to support literacy, numeracy, and curriculum subjects. Tailored provision may include speech and language therapy, auditory training, BSL, and mentoring.

Science

Pupils refine practical skills and investigative methods, including hypothesis writing, variable control, and risk assessment. In topics such as Evolution and Inheritance, Contact Forces, and Heating and Cooling, pupils apply advanced mathematical skills, rearranging equations and independently selecting graphs, including best-fit lines. Pupils also study models in science, considering their strengths and limitations, before developing their own. Extended writing tasks focus on logical organisation of scientific ideas, while error and accuracy are addressed in practical work.

We are confident that this year will prepare pupils effectively for the challenges of GCSE. With your continued support, we look forward to a successful and rewarding year.

If further detail about the curriculum is needed, more information is provided in the subject curriculum maps found on the school's website.

Yours faithfully,



Nicola Welch
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