

YEAR 8: AUTUMN

Welcome to our Autumn term Curriculum Letter. There are plenty of extra-curricular activities for students to get involved in this half term and many departments will be running exciting activities.

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

Year 8 have been working on a theme of Fantastic and Strange – this has manifested itself through initial ideas for inventing the name and visual sign for a Public House – an extremely interesting and varied part of British Folk Art history. Pupils are now moving on to the production of thumbnails in readiness for a final piece. In other classes, pupils are working on a metamorphosis project, combining aspects of Flora and Fauna into one piece.

COMPUTING

Year 8 learned all about binary and how different media such as sound and image are stored as 1s and 0s. They have now moved onto developing interactive stories through Python code.

DRAMA

Physical Theatre
In this engaging unit, students discover how the body can become a powerful tool for storytelling, using movement, gesture, facial expression, mime, sound and physicality to communicate ideas and characters. They explore the distinctive style of Physical Theatre and learn about influential theatre companies, including Frantic Assembly, Box House Theatre and DV8. Through imaginative and energetic practical activities, students develop their confidence, concentration, creativity, physical awareness and ability to work effectively as an ensemble.

Students experiment with transforming their bodies into objects, furniture and machines before developing their own physical stories. They then work collaboratively to rehearse and perform Goldilocks and the Three Bears as a Physical Theatre piece, combining narration, movement, sound effects and imaginative physical creations. Throughout the unit, students refine their performances and develop their ability to create visually engaging theatre, culminating in an assessed performance focused on originality, staying in role, confidence, smooth transitions and teamwork.

ENGLISH

Students begin by studying non-fiction travel writing, considering how writers convey their perspectives using a range of descriptive and rhetorical devices.

They then begin their study of the novel The Bone Sparrow by Zana Fraillon. The text explores attitudes towards migrants through the story of a refugee child in Australia, and students will develop their analytical skills through considering the importance of the presentation of setting, building upon their expectations of Australia from travel Writing, as well as the construction of character and themes.

GEOGRAPHY

In geography students have been learning about World Cities, including the rapid growth of megacities and the challenges this brings. They will move on to our Challenging Coastlines topic where they will learn about the landforms of our local coastline and the management challenges we face. Students will develop skills in research, drawing and analysing graphs, using ordnance survey maps to identify landforms and interpret the landscape as well as building knowledge of geographical processes.

HISTORY

Pupils will continue their study of seventeenth-century Britain, exploring the causes and key events of the English Civil War and examining why tensions between King Charles I and Parliament ultimately led to the king's execution in 1649. They will then investigate the rule of Oliver Cromwell, considering whether he was a good or bad leader through historical evidence and a class debate. Their learning will move on to the Restoration of the monarchy under Charles II, exploring his extravagant lifestyle and reputation as the 'King of Bling'. Pupils will also examine two significant events that shaped life in seventeenth-century London: the devastating Great Plague and the Great Fire of London in 1666. They will then explore the Glorious Revolution and how it changed the relationship between the monarchy and Parliament. Finally, pupils will bring their knowledge together in a lively Stuart versus Hanoverian 'It's a Knockout!' competition, testing their understanding of the period and the changing nature of the British monarchy.

Alongside their historical knowledge, pupils will continue to develop essential historical skills. They will explore how to analyse historical sources, focusing on identifying bias, making inferences and evaluating the usefulness and reliability of evidence. They will also develop their extended writing skills, learning how to construct well-developed PETAL paragraphs and to communicate clear, supported and analytical historical arguments.

MATHEMATICS

Students will continue to develop their knowledge and confidence across number, algebra, geometry and statistics. They will learn to apply the laws of indices and use standard form to calculate with very large and very small numbers, revisit and extend their understanding of angles and polygons, and solve increasingly complex geometric problems. In algebra, students will simplify expressions, expand and factorise brackets, substitute into formulae and form, and solve equations in a variety of contexts. They will also develop their statistical skills by drawing and interpreting diagrams and graphs, calculating and comparing averages, and exploring relationships in data through scatter graphs and correlation. Throughout their learning, students will strengthen their problem-solving, reasoning and mathematical communication skills by applying their knowledge to a range of real-life and mathematical situations.

MFL: FRENCH

This half term, Year 8 students will continue their study of Les vacances (holidays), building on previously learned language to talk about holiday experiences.

Students will learn vocabulary related to holiday activities, weather, and packing lists, enabling them to describe holiday plans and discuss different travel experiences in greater detail.

In grammar, pupils will reinforce their knowledge of the present tense and develop their use of the future tense to talk about upcoming holidays and plans. They will also be introduced to 'if clauses', allowing them to express ideas such as what they will do in different situations or under different conditions.

By the end of the unit, students will be able to describe holiday experiences and future plans with increasing accuracy and confidence.

MFL: SPANISH

This half term, Year 8 students will continue their study of Valencia, based on an imaginary visit to the Spanish city. Through a range of engaging activities, pupils will explore different aspects of a visit to Valencia while extending their knowledge of Spanish language and culture.

Students will learn a range of more complex verbs to describe holiday activities and experiences in greater detail. They will also develop their use of sequencing time phrases to structure longer pieces of speaking and writing, helping them to describe events in a clear and logical order.

In grammar, the main focus will be the future tense. Students will learn how to talk about upcoming plans and intentions, using the future tense to describe activities they will do, places they will visit and experiences they hope to have.

By the end of the unit, students will be able to describe their dream trip to Valencia in the future tense.

MUSIC

In Year 8, students will be developing their knowledge of major chords from their Blues performance, through looking at festive pieces that incorporate extended 7th chords.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Year 8 pupils have continued to build upon the foundations established in Year 7, developing their skills, knowledge and confidence across a range of sporting activities. Through our Head, Heart, Hands approach to assessment and learning, pupils have been encouraged to refine their performance, deepen their understanding and take greater responsibility for their own learning.

Throughout the term, pupils have focused on improving their technical skills and applying components of fitness more effectively (Hands), developing their tactical awareness, decision-making and understanding of rules in increasingly challenging situations (Head), and demonstrating greater independence, teamwork, communication and leadership (Heart).

As in Year 7, each class follows a rotational programme, meaning the activities covered this term have varied between groups. Any activities not yet completed will be covered during the Spring Term, ensuring all pupils have the opportunity to experience the full curriculum.

RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY& ETHICS

Students are studying an ethics unit entitled Good? Bad? Right? Wrong? How Do We Decide? They will explore how people make moral decisions, examining ethical viewpoints from different religious traditions as well as Humanism. Through class discussions, case studies and a visit from a Humanist speaker, students will explain a range of ethical perspectives and evaluate how useful they are when addressing real-world moral issues.

SCIENCE

Biology:

Our KS3 Curriculum is designed to develop inquisitive scientists that can apply scientific literacy throughout there everyday lives to become critical thinkers. Our curriculum, practical's and extra curricular activities all aim to inspire curiosity within our students about the world and potential issues. Through discussions, hands on activities and group work we aim to upskill and empower our students to be true global citizens. So far this term they have been studying about diet and digestion with a focus on organs and enzymes. We are now moving onto respiration and the impact of exercise.

Chemistry:

Students will be studying how elements are organised to form the modern periodic table. Students will then study specific groups of the periodic table, including Group 1 - the alkali metals; Group 7 0 - the halogens, Group 0 - the noble gases and the transition elements. The physical and chemical properties of these groups will be explored and students will appreciate the importance of these elements in every day applications.

Physics:

This term, Year 8 students will be studying Forces 2 in Physics, extending on the content of Forces learnt in Year 7. They will explore moments of forces, pressure and magnetism, developing their understanding of how forces affect objects and how magnets interact. Most groups may also begin the next unit, Electric Circuits, before Christmas, investigating electric current and how circuits work.