

KEY STAGE 3 CURRICULUM SUMMARY BOOKLET

**YEAR 8
2009/2010**



Achieving Excellence Together

English

Course aims and content

The English curriculum at Key Stage 3 is designed to develop in our students the ability to express themselves confidently, to think logically and imaginatively, and to attain a deep understanding of literature. The course is designed to promote high levels of competence in students' command of the three skills areas of reading, writing and speaking and listening. Through a variety of teaching and learning styles, it fosters an inventive, creative approach to developing ideas, making connections and finding solutions, and allows students to employ a range of communicative skills and strategies, which will support their cross-curricular achievement. The English curriculum aims to develop a critical understanding of how meaning is shaped both in texts from the English literary heritage, and in those from a variety of different cultures and traditions.

In Year 8, the students continue to build on the skills developed in Year 7 through the study of a wide range of interesting texts from the major genres of prose fiction and non-fiction, poetry and drama. The level of difficulty of the material studied naturally increases in terms of language, content and length, with a greater focus on the analysis and production of whole, extended texts rather than extracts. Students are encouraged to deepen their analysis of structural and linguistic features in the texts studied, to relate these texts to their social and historical context, and to write confidently for a greater range of purposes and audiences.

More specifically, students learn how to craft their creative writing and adapt it to the demands of a specific audience through the exploration and production of writing for young children. They enhance their understanding of English literary heritage through the study of a complete Shakespeare text and the ballad form, and examine the relation of text and context by exploring short stories and modern drama. The conventions of a variety of non-fiction text types are studied. The practice of oral skills through debate, presentations and drama-based activities continues to play a key role in the development of the students' communication skills.

In addition, key functional skills in spelling, punctuation, grammar and syntax, which underpin successful independent writing, are consolidated through weekly language lessons. During these lessons, students will explore aspects of language in context, and will be encouraged to reflect and build on their written communication skills both in English lessons and across the curriculum.

Students are set in Year 8. This enables those who experience difficulties with some aspects of the subject to work, at times, at a slower pace, and to consolidate basic language skills, while able students are given opportunities to access more challenging texts and tasks. Mobility among the sets is expected, and is determined by the students' ongoing performance, as well as their achievement in regular key assessment tasks.

The English Department assesses oral and written work, with at least one formal assessment per unit, using assessment for learning methodology and offering both formative and summative feedback. During the course, students are encouraged to become reflective and critical learners through evaluating their own strengths and weaknesses, and setting themselves realistic, attainable targets for improvement with guidance from their English teacher.

Mathematics

Course aims and content

Every student in Key Stage 3 is encouraged to access their highest level and fulfil their own mathematical potential. Learning opportunities in the classroom are varied: whole class teaching with and without the interactive whiteboard, paired and group work, individual and whole class learning through interactive websites, mental strategies, hands-on approaches and traditional individual exercises from worksheets and textbooks. Methods of assessment focus on providing constructive, positive feedback to students in order for them to improve their understanding and learning. Ultimately we are trying to foster a culture of student

self-assessment and encourage them to be independent thinkers and learners. Our ultimate aim is to improve learning for every student in a friendly, supportive and stimulating environment.

Students are placed in appropriate sets that will further enhance their learning opportunities. Those who find that maths poses few problems for them are placed in larger class sets whereas students who struggle with certain areas of maths are placed in smaller class sets. In this way the weaker students benefit from more one-on-one teacher support and will be able to make more rapid progress towards their own learning targets. Stronger students will have the opportunity to access extension material and higher order thinking tasks either on an individual or group basis.

We have high expectations for all our students and set appropriately challenging but realistic targets for everyone.

The following topics will be covered throughout the year:

Algebra

- Integers, powers and roots
- Equations and formulae
- Diagrams and graphs
- Solving equations
- Equations and graphs

Number

- Fractions, decimals and percentages
- Place value and calculations
- Ratio, proportion and solving problems

Shape, space and measure

- Angles and shapes
- Measures
- Transformations
- Construction

Handling data

- Probability
- Analysing statistics
- Collecting, displaying and analysing data

Science

Course aims and content

The aim of the Science Department is to enable students to understand a broad range of scientific concepts, facts, principles and theories, while developing their own consciousness of science in the context of the real world.

The emphasis is on 'learning by discovery' and as a result practical work, investigation skills and ICT are the focal points of many lessons. They will employ and develop skills enabling students to observe, predict, test, record, analyse and evaluate across a wide range of scientific topics. The subject matter to be explored is as follows:

- Rocks and Weathering
- Sound
- Respiration
- Mixtures & Compounds
- Magnets and Electromagnets
- Microbes and Disease

- Ecological Relationships
- Light
- Atoms and Elements
- Heating and Cooling
- Food and Digestion

In Year 8 students are tested with SAT style questions after completion of each two topics. Review and reflection of performance takes place and students are encouraged to identify successes and those areas that need more work.

Information and Communication Technology

Course aims and content

The ICT department at JESS aims to provide students with ICT skills that are transferable across all disciplines combined with an understanding of ICT and Computing as a subject.

In Year 8, students will:

- learn how to manage their area of the network and understand file storage principles. They will discuss the conventions of behaviour relating to respect for others' work, use of passwords, copying and plagiarism.
- Learn how to design and build interactive web pages using both HTML and Dreamweaver. They will use these skills to produce a website to promote healthy eating to their peers.
- Use a spreadsheet to generate models. They will ask questions of the models in order to analyse and present data.
- Use the internet to gather information on a particular topic, collate it and present it from a particular viewpoint. They will select information and consider the usefulness, provenance, reliability, status and ias of the information they collect and use.
- Be introduced to the ways in which organizations collect data, the Data Protection Act, and the different ways data can be protected from misuse or damage.
- Learn the basic features of Access. They will set up a flat file database and create a use interface for a business situation.

French

Course aims and content

In Year 8 students continue to develop their language skills across the key areas of listening, reading, speaking and writing. They are encouraged to become increasingly independent in their learning and to apply their knowledge of grammar and structures. They are also encouraged to become more creative in their use of language and in the way they work, using language for their own purposes rather than merely to practise skills. Further emphasis is made on cultural knowledge and contact with France. In addition to the topics: family, jobs, free time and going out, shopping, eating and drinking, holidays and friends, students work on the three main time frames: past, present and future.

The French Department uses a variety of assessment techniques throughout each year, including peer and self assessment, teacher assessment of group and individual work, and the marking of unit tests. Students are encouraged to reflect on their own learning and set themselves targets for further progress.

Arabic

Course aims and content

In Year 8 students are introduced to the wider aspects of Arabic language and literacy. Students will become familiar with the varying forms of all Arabic letters (initial, medial and final) and be able to write familiar words in Arabic and to sound out or decode unfamiliar words in print. Building on these essentials skills of reading and writing in Arabic, students are introduced to an extended range of vocabulary topics which allows students to begin to personalise language use for their own purposes. Individual expression becomes possible once confidence is acquired in identifying and using key forms and patterns of the language.

Topics covered include the family, occupations, describing where people live, describing where things are, ordering food/drink in a restaurant or a café, talking about food, and asking about price.

Islamic Studies

Course aims and content

This course is offered to our Muslim students as an enhancement to their curriculum as directed by the Ministry of Education.

The course aims to promote Islamic spirit and accordingly build an understanding of their religion. Areas covered include:

- Pillars of Islam
- Pillars of Imam (Faith)
- Short Surahs from the Holy Quran
- Life of Prophet Muhamad (pbuh) and other prophets
- Great gifts of Allah
- Islamic calendar
- Islam and the world
- So taught our Prophet Muhamad (pbuh)-Al-Hadith
- The festivals of Islam
- Companions of Prophet Muhamad (pbuh)
- Islamic calligraphy and architecture
- Muslim manners
- Cleanliness
- Islamic supplications (Dua'a) for different occasions, to make the students aware that Allah constantly watches over all human beings
- Songs and verses, games and illustrations that promote Islamic values in our everyday activities

Geography

Course aims and content

Geography is a dynamic subject which we as a department hope to deliver in an imaginative and enthusiastic manner. As a department we facilitate the curriculum using a variety of teaching and learning techniques and also incorporate formative assessment into our schemes of work throughout Key Stage 3. Each student will also have a fieldwork opportunity to experience part of the Geography curriculum. Through engaging and motivating lessons, student will become interested in the world around them, acquiring knowledge and understanding from a range of places and environments. Through encouraging students to think independently we inspire them to develop a sense of place and an

appreciation of the environment, as well as an awareness of the ways in which people and environments interact.

Within Year 8 students will study six units covering a physical and human element. Themes and skills will be developed throughout the year and transferable across the wider school curriculum. Students will be able to describe and explain the geographical themes, shown below, and be able to link this to how we manage our world.

	Term One		Term Two		Term Three	
Year Group	A	B	A	B	A	B
Year 8	Ecosystems	Desert and Rainforests	Weather	Climate	Coasts and Management	Geography of Sport

History

Course aims and content

"History is made by people. When you understand people, you can live a full life."

History aims to bring colour to the curriculum, not just through tales of some of the most exotic, colourful characters students will ever have the chance to learn about at school, but by delivering active and imaginative lessons which capture their imagination. The quote above by Charles Miller Smith sums up the department's aim in its teaching of History; by getting pupils to understand the past actions of peoples and societies, they can not only see how the world we live in today has been shaped but they can also begin to understand and make reasoned judgements about the actions of people today.

The Year 8 course aims to develop students' ability to question and make deductions about the past through the study of:

- Examining religious changes in Europe during the middle ages
- Oliver Cromwell; Hero or Villain? Making a film trailer
- Life in Industrial Britain; The Aire Street role play
- Chartism; How to write historical fiction
- Crime, punishment and transportation; Designing a museum

Art and Design

Course aims and content

The Art and Design curriculum aims to encourage and facilitate the flowering of creativity that we believe to be endemic in our students. Art and Design contributes to the school curriculum by offering a distinctive way of learning, where seeing, feeling, thinking and making are combined in a powerful form of visual and tactile communication.

The Art and Design curriculum which we offer is also distinctive in a variety of ways in offering opportunities for students to:

- develop their creativity and imagination through visual, tactile and sensory experiences

- develop practical, technical and critical skills and use visual and tactile language to communicate their ideas, feelings and meanings
- learn to make value judgements and aesthetic and practical decisions so that they become actively involved in shaping environments
- explore ideas and meanings in the work of artists, craftspeople and designers and learn about the diverse roles and functions of Art, Craft and Design in the contemporary world and in different times and cultures

The aim of the Key Stage 3 course is to improve students' visual literacy through exposure to key art works from different cultures and experimentation with a wide variety of art processes and materials. They will develop skills in order to be able to:

- explore and develop ideas
- investigate and make art, craft and design
- evaluate and develop work
- knowledge of different cultures within an international environment

There are examples of themes across Key Stage 3

- self and experiences
- natural and made objects and materials
- environments

Examples of Year 8 unit titles are 'Emotions', 'Objects and Viewpoints' and 'Shared View of their Locality'. In these units, students explore the emotive use of colour seen through the work of artists to communicate ideas and generate responses. They will explore familiar objects from different viewpoints and construct a temporary site for specific work which represents a shared view of their locality. They will use a range of materials during the year, including lino printing media, 3D sculptural materials such as modroc and papier-mâché and batik processes. Year 8 allows the students to build upon the skills acquired in the Year 7 foundation course, particularly in 3D materials. ICT is an integral component of the curriculum and students will have the opportunity to incorporate Adobe software programmes into their work when exploring ideas or as final outcomes

Art, Design and Technology/Graphics

Course aims and content

The ADT/Graphics course at JESS aims to contribute to the school curriculum by offering a series of Graphics units which complements and supports the work currently completed in Art and Design and Design and Technology.

The course develops students' manipulation and use of several Bitmap and Vector software e.g. Adobe PhotoShop, Illustrator, 2D design and 3D Pro Desktop. They will develop skills in order to be able to:

- Explore and develop ideas
- Manipulate graphic media to realise outcomes
- Work to a specific design brief
- Solve problems and arrive at feasible conclusions
- Develop, plan and communicate ideas

During the year, students will be introduced to units on the following:

- Planning and production of a double page spread for a book.
- A design project resulting in the design and modeling of a prototype computer mouse.
- A design project resulting in the design of blister packaging

Design and Technology

Course aims and content

The Design and Technology Department is currently supported by two fully equipped workshops and a design studio / ICT facility. Students in KS3 will have access to these facilities in order to produce high quality outcomes, using the full range of resistant materials and graphic media.

The Department will encompass CAD (Computer Aided Design) and CAM (Computer Aided Manufacture) through the use of 2D Design Tools and 3D ProDesktop software packages, which will be linked to a Laser Cutter, 3D Router and a Vinyl Cutter. Graphics students will also have access to the full Adobe design suite and the choice of two purpose built computer rooms.

It is anticipated that these processes and resources will then lead into KS4 and beyond as the school continues to develop, which in turn will lead to the introduction of KS4 examination courses in Resistant Materials and Graphic Products. The introduction of 3D CAD/CAM processes is also anticipated at this stage.

Design and Technology is based firmly on a problem solving approach to learning, through designing and making. As the foundation to this approach, the design process is followed in all areas of the subject, and is used as the common structure for all student schemes of work. The aim of the Key Stage 3 course is to give students of all abilities, the opportunity to investigate, communicate (both orally and graphically) and to think critically in order to analyse and evaluate design solutions. They are expected to co-operate with their peers in group tasks and are encouraged to manage, plan and structure design briefs in order to meet given deadlines.

The course will focus on the following six sub skills of designing and making:

- Exploring ideas and the task
- Generating ideas
- Developing and modelling ideas
- Planning
- Evaluating
- Making high-quality products

Students will explore needs, wants and opportunities in the context of *designing for clients*. They will suggest criteria that might have been used when designing and making a product.

Projects could include:

- A clock designed and made from a given piece of aluminium
- A flower vase or stand based around a standard test-tube, made in acrylic
- A wooden frame to hold a personal photograph.

Students will be given every opportunity to incorporate ICT skills into their work. However, pupils should be taught that CAD and CAM are simply additional tools which a designer has available and which should be used as and when appropriate.

Drama

Course aims and content

The JESS Drama curriculum encourages and facilitates explorations and investigations of the world in which we live. The use of a variety of dramatic strategies and conventions are adopted in order to consider important social and personal themes. A range of dramatic stimuli including: photography, literatures, mask, film, historical events and journalism are used to 'trigger' studio based workshops, discussions and evaluations.

In addition to the development of the students' ideas and opinions on life issues there will be a strong focus on communication, language and confidence skills.

Music

Course aims and content

By engaging students in making and responding to music, music education offers opportunities for them to:

- Develop their understanding and appreciation of a wide range of music, extend their own interests and increase their ability to make judgments about music quality
- Acquire the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to make music, e.g. in community music making, and, where appropriate, to follow a music-related career
- Develop the skills, attitudes and attributes that can support learning in other subject areas and are needed for employment and life, e.g. listening skills, concentration, creativity, intuition, aesthetic sensitivity, perseverance, self-confidence and sensitivity towards others

Each student in Year 8 receives one music lesson per week. Lessons involve a wide variety of individual, small group and whole class activities.

During the course students will acquire and consolidate a range of basic musical skills, knowledge and understanding, through the activities of listening, performing and composing.

- Listening – students listen to a wide variety of music of different styles, periods and cultures
- Composing – students are encouraged to explore sounds and create their own music through experimentation and improvisation. ICT plays an important role in this aspect of the course and students use music software to compose and arrange music.
- Performing – students are involved in many performing activities, including whole class performances, group and solo performances

Additional Information

For students wishing to learn to play a musical instrument there is a thriving instrumental teaching programme, which is run on a private basis after school hours. There is also a flourishing Rock School, which has proved to be a great hit with our young musicians! In addition, there are opportunities for all students to participate in a range of extra-curricular musical activities, both vocal and instrumental.

Physical Education

Course aims and content

The aim of the Physical Education department is to develop the physical, social and mental well-being of all students. Students will develop a range of different motor skills, techniques, and begin to understand how to apply them to many different activities.

The curriculum focus is on developing understanding of what makes a performance effective and how to apply these principles to their own and others' work. Students will be expected to take the initiative in a variety of roles including leader and official while making independent decisions about what to do to improve performance.

Students will be taught to acquire and develop their skills in a variety of contexts. During the course of the year students will be challenged to select and apply skills learned with a view to developing tactics and compositional ideas.

Underpinning all lessons within Physical Education will be the principles of health and fitness, as students develop a greater understanding of both their own and others' well being.

Student activities for the year are as follows:-

Year 8

- Swimming
- Health Related Fitness
- Rugby
- Football
- Netball
- Softball/Rounders
- Volleyball
- Gymnastics
- Athletics
- Water Safety
- Dance

Students will also have the opportunity to extend / enhance their learning through the broad spectrum of extra curricular activities.