Year 8

Curriculum Information
2020 - 2021

A Reference Booklet
for Parents and Carers

Contact: Mrs Z Harris, Deputy Headteacher
Reach for the stars!

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope this booklet about the subjects your daughter is studying in Year 8 will be of interest to you. It contains lots of valuable information and provides an overview of the Year 8 curriculum.

The first few introductory pages of the booklet give an outline of the Year 8 curriculum at MGGS; what subjects your daughter is studying, details about the National Curriculum and our own Curriculum Extra programme, assessment and homework.

After the introduction, you will find a summary about each subject in Year 8; what work will be covered, how your daughter will be assessed, what progress is expected, the types of homework likely to be set, useful websites and how parents and carers can help.

It would be very helpful if you could spend some time with your daughter going through this booklet together as it will ‘map out’ the year ahead for her. At MGGS we want all of our pupils to realise their full potential both academically and in their personal development, in other words to ‘reach for the stars’.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Zoë Harris
Deputy Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead
The Year 8 Curriculum at MGGS in a Nutshell …

There are five lessons a day, each one hour long. We operate a two week timetable (Weeks 1 and 2) and therefore the timetable for Week 1 will be different to Week 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Lessons</th>
<th>Number of lessons per fortnight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and Technology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrichment</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Foreign Languages</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Studies</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Stage 3 and the National Curriculum (NC)

Our Year 8 students follow the programmes of study of the new National Curriculum (NC). In addition to the NC we have our own additional enrichment and extension programmes for all the subjects that your daughter will be studying; this programme is called Curriculum Extra.

Central to all our lessons is an enquiry based approach. We want our students to explore ‘big questions and themes’; to research, discuss, analyse and reach carefully considered opinions and views.

We also have scheduled into the timetable two hours a fortnight of enrichment that looks at issues well beyond the NC but which are important in developing a broad based education and fostering intellectual challenge and debate. These enrichment lessons will focus upon Big Questions with a different big question being studied each Kent term.

In Modern Foreign Languages (MFL), students will continue to study French alongside either German or Spanish, according to which second modern foreign language was started in Year 7.
Our MGGS Mindset programme is well established across the school, promoting that students need vision, significant effort, effective systems, varied practice and a good attitude in order to achieve their full potential. We firmly believe that these skills, traits and habits can be learned and developed, and have lots of activities designed to assist with this.

We look at different aspects in each Key Stage, focusing on attitude in Key Stage 3, adding vision and systems in Key Stage 4, before looking at the whole programme in the Sixth Form.

Students receive explicit teaching about MGGS Mindset during special year group sessions led by senior staff. This is supported by subject specific activities, as well as mentoring, form activities and assemblies.

At MGGS we believe that technology should be embedded within teaching and learning throughout the school and that we should use both existing and emerging technologies as a means of preparing our students for the digital age. Learning to use digital resources appropriately and effectively is an essential part of education.

We teach, collaborate and communicate via Google throughout the school. New students often comment on how Google has transformed their learning. All our current Year 7s have their own chromebook and this is being further extended across the school. There are Google Classrooms and Drives for subjects, houses and many other groups, including Student Voice, Careers and the Aspire UCAS Early Entry group. Additionally, MGGS has been selected by the DfE to be a Computing Hub school, one of only 30 in the country.

MGGS has been an Advanced Thinking School since May 2015. Our students are equipped with tools designed to reorganise, frame and extend their thinking, promoting deeper learning.

Students will be introduced to the Thinking Tools as part of their induction to the school and will then practise these in lessons across all subjects. Students also have an opportunity to attend training sessions to develop their use of these invaluable tools during the revision season.

Advanced thinking is embedded in all we do, and there are opportunities to celebrate this through outreach days, competitions and the Festival of Thinking in the Autumn term.
Grading in Year 8

The Key Stage 3 National Curriculum does not have ‘assessment levels’. Schools have the freedom to develop their own means of assessing pupils’ progress towards the end of key stage expectations. At MGGS students work in Year 8 will be measured using the MGGS Attainment grade system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MGGS Attainment Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A: Exceptional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B: Secure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C: Developing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D: Below our expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Work completed in lessons, core assessments and homework can be awarded Attainment grades, including +/- scores as well. E.g. A-, B+. These grades will vary from each piece of work, depending on the nature of the task and how well your daughter has completed it. Tracking reviews give a summative reflection of all the work completed over the period covered by the tracking In tracking reviews and reports a single grade with be given, i.e. with no +/-.

What do the grades in tracking reviews and reports mean?

Our expectation is that by continuing to work steadily most of our students should be able to achieve a current GCSE grade of 6 in each of her subjects. All GCSEs are now graded on a 9 to 1 scale. The attainment grades mean that if your daughter continues to work as she is now working then by the time she takes her GCSEs she is likely to receive the following grades, based on her current progress:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New GCSE grades</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 7 and above as achieve an A and above.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 4 and above as currently achieve a grade C and above.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The bottom of grade 1 will be aligned with the bottom of grade G.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current GCSE grades</th>
<th>A*</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MGGS Attainment grades</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Progression

Please note that if a student’s MGGS attainment grade remains the same from one assessment to the next this does not mean that the student is not making progress as they will have learnt new material from one assessment to the next. Only when the most recent grade is lower than the previous grade would less progress have been made. Subject specific details of what is required to maintain good progression is given on the subject pages of this booklet.

Assessment in Year 8

At MGGS your daughter will be assessed in a variety of ways to help monitor the progress that she is making. Common to all subjects will be ‘core assessments’. Core assessments are the same for all classes for a subject and allow departments to use standardised mark schemes. This means that the progress of all students can be monitored fairly and consistently within each subject area. There are many types of core assessment tasks and they include topic tests, projects, written exercises and presentations. In addition to
core assessments your daughter will complete other pieces of work that will help her teachers assess how
she is doing. There is also an assessment week in Term 6 where students will take summative subject tests.

We are very keen for students themselves to develop a deeper understanding of how they can further
improve. Therefore, with each core assessment and some other tasks there will be opportunities for self-
assessment. In addition, we also encourage students to peer assess the work of other students. At MGGS
we use the term ‘Assessment as Learning’ to describe a student’s involvement in assessment of their own
and others’ progress, in order to inform learning.

Parents and carers will receive a Tracking Reviews during the academic year along with a full School Report
in Term 6. The Tracking Reviews give a summary picture of your daughter’s progress in each of her
subjects whilst the School Report provides more detailed information. There is also a Parents’ Evening in
Term 4.

Our comprehensive systems of assessment, tracking and reporting provide valuable information to
determine the progress of each student and what additional support may be needed if necessary.

Homework & Independent Learning in Year 8

Homework is set for a number of reasons. These include:

- To encourage students to develop the skills, confidence and motivation needed to study effectively
  on their own, leading to independent learning. This is vital given the importance for students in the
  future of life-long learning and adaptability.
- To consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding developed at school.
- To extend school learning, for example through additional reading.
- To prepare for activities and work to be undertaken in future lessons.
- To make use of resources that may not be available in the classroom.
- To sustain the involvement of parents and carers in the management of students’ learning and
  keeping them informed about the work students are doing.
- In future, to manage the particular demands of public examination coursework.

At MGGS a variety of homework tasks and activities is given to Year 8 students and includes:

- the completion of lesson work
- answering written questions which consolidate and/or extend classroom based work
- researching
- reading
- preparing presentations
- carrying out creative projects
- completing practical and/or investigation based work
- revising for tests and examinations
- consolidating notes from lessons

Where at all possible homework tasks and activities are set to help in the development of a wide range of
skills as well as knowledge based work per se. Skills include being able to successfully:

- study and learn independently
- research, investigate and enquire
- critically appraise and evaluate
- plan and write essays
- use and manipulate mathematical functions
- develop creative processes such as drawing, construction and composition
- develop gross and fine physical co-ordination with regard to sports and the creative arts
- word process and/or handwrite as appropriate
● use ICT desktop publishing software
● develop communication skills in presentations to others

Homework is set regularly in each subject area and your daughter will have been given a homework timetable which tells her which homework is being set on particular days. In some subjects such as Music, Art and Design & Technology, homework times may be amalgamated into ‘blocks of time’ so that a larger piece of work can be completed. In such cases, students will be advised of this at the start of the block of time so that they can plan how and when they complete the work.

It is important that your daughter writes all her homework clearly in her ‘planner’. She should show you her planners on a regular basis and ask you to sign it. It would be very helpful if you could check that she is writing down all homework and completing it on time.

At MGGS, the amount of homework for each subject is scheduled as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 8</th>
<th>Homework allocations: two week timetable cycle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>1 x 50 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and Technology</td>
<td>3 x 20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>1 x 50 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>2 x 50 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>1 x 50 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>1 x 50 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computing</td>
<td>1 x 50 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>2 x 50 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Foreign Languages</td>
<td>1 x 50 minutes (French)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 x 50 minutes (German or Spanish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>2 x 20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Studies</td>
<td>1 x 50 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>2 x 50 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can take students a while to settle down into good working patterns with their homework. There can be a danger that too much time is spent on the homework and/or lack of organisation causes some stress in meeting deadlines. Should you have any concerns about this please contact your daughter’s form tutor in the first instance.

Google Classrooms, Drive and Sites

All students will be given their individual usernames and passwords to access our Google Classrooms, Drive and Sites which form part of the school’s Google virtual learning environment. These will contain a lot of useful information for students to use and which can be accessed online, whether at school or at home.

Subject Information

In the pages that follow, information is given about each of the subjects that your daughter is studying.

Please note that the school does not take any responsibility for the content of third party websites listed in this booklet. You are advised to check any websites that your daughter may use.
Art

The Art Department believes that every student is a creative being and aims for all to fulfil their potential within an enjoyable and engaging atmosphere. Students are given the opportunity to communicate and express ideas, to develop independence in approach and to gain confidence to take creative risks in a supportive environment. Transferable and individual personal learning and thinking skills are encouraged, as is the development of respect and appreciation for the work of others. The learning framework for the year 8 curriculum provides a journey through specific points in the 20th Century Art timeline, showing how art has slowly evolved and been closely influenced with world events at the time.

Course outline: Art

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Topic focus</th>
<th>‘Big Question’ around topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term 1</td>
<td>20th Century Timeline</td>
<td>How does art evolve from current affairs and culture?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td>20th Century Timeline</td>
<td>How does art evolve from current affairs and culture?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3</td>
<td>20th Century Timeline</td>
<td>How does Art evolve from other art?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 4</td>
<td>Pop Art &amp; News</td>
<td>Why does the purpose of a piece of artwork matter?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 5</td>
<td>Pop Art &amp; News</td>
<td>How does the context in which a piece of Art is made influence the outcome?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 6</td>
<td>Pop Art &amp; News</td>
<td>How does the context in which a piece of Art is made influence the outcome?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Term 1-3: 20th Century Timeline

The students will be collating a 20th century timeline and be introduced to the concept behind German Expressionism, Cubism, Russian Constructivism, Surrealism and Abstract Expressionism. Within each movement, they will analyse artists’ work and produce their own response using different, appropriate media. They will evaluate how each movement links to the art movement that have come before and the world events going on in that time.

Term 4-6: Pop Art & News

Students will then move on to Pop Art in the 1960’s and learn about the context of this movement. They will then create some contemporary Pop Art illustrations based on the current news and create a reduction lino print using key formal elements from the movement.

Assessment: Art

The department uses a RAG assessment sheet against agreed success criteria, in addition to comment-based assessment. This gives feedback to students on their achievements and targets their next steps to develop their ability and understanding further. Throughout the year, students are given core assessment tasks, which help us to monitor progress. These, along with the grades achieved for homework and class projects, are used to determine attainment. Grades are given to help support student understanding of their achievement i.e. at the conclusion of class projects, for core assessment tasks and, when applicable, to reinforce teacher comments. Teacher/student discussion and verbal assessment take place throughout all lessons and students take part in self and peer assessment at strategic points in their work. Students evaluate their learning and set themselves targets regularly throughout the year.
Progression: Art
It is expected that most students in years 7-9 will be working at the ‘B: Secure’ grade in respect to the development of their knowledge, understanding, skills and techniques. The main criteria for deciding grades are as follows:

C: Developing
The student is making some progress in the development of skills, techniques and understanding in relation to recording, the use of materials, the exploration of ideas, the development of personal outcomes and within the analysis of the work of artists and designers.

B: Secure
The student is securely developing skills, techniques and understanding in relation to recording, the use of materials, the exploration of ideas, the development of personal outcomes and within the analysis of the work of artists and designers.

A: Exceptional
The student is making exceptional progress in the development of skills, techniques and understanding in relation to recording, the use of materials, the exploration of ideas, the development of personal outcomes and within the analysis of the work of artists and designers.

Homework: Art
Homework is set on a regular basis with the expectation that students spend their time on each task to ensure focused and quality outcomes that build on the knowledge and understanding developed in the classroom. Activities include: practising techniques and skills when recording from observation, research, the generation and development of ideas and stand-alone pieces, the critical analysis of the work of others and the reflection on the student’s learning.

Websites: Art
www.nationalgallery.org.uk National Gallery [12th to early 20th century art]
www.tate.org.uk Tate galleries [20th – 21st century art]
www.britishmuseum.org British Museum [Multi-cultural artefacts]
www.vam.ac.uk Victoria and Albert Museum [Multi-cultural art and design]

How parents and carers can help in Art
Parents can help their daughters through ensuring that homework tasks are given the allocated concentrated time and not left to the last minute. Gallery visits [local and national] are an excellent way to develop insights into the world of art and design as well as helping to generate ideas. Also discussing ideas in relation to projects and themes help to extend possibilities for personal pieces of artwork.

Computing Year 8
Course outline: Computing
The increasing use of technology in all aspects of society makes confident, creative and productive use of computing an essential skill for life. Computing capability encompasses not only the mastery of technical skills and techniques, but also the understanding to apply these skills purposefully, safely and responsibly in learning, everyday life and employment. Computing capability is fundamental to participation and engagement in modern society.
In Year 8 students continue to develop an understanding of key concepts in computing by beginning their journey on a text-based programming language. They also build on their skills with a number of software packages. They would be introduced to how data is stored in the computer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Topic focus</th>
<th>‘Big Question’ around topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● What do we mean by the binary, denary and hexadecimal number system?</td>
<td>How is data represented within the computer?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Representing a number in the binary system.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Converting data between binary, denary and hexadecimal number systems.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Binary addition of numbers</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Basic Python programming</td>
<td>What are the basic blocks of a computer program?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Understanding the process of a computer system</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Using algorithms to solve problems</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Be able to use variables, input/output and selection in programs.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Term 3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Use of media in society</td>
<td>How can digital media tell a story?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Recording podcasts</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Editing pictures and videos</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Produce a video clip with music using Serif / Windows Movie Maker</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Term 4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Intermediate Python programming (selection &amp; iteration)</td>
<td>What makes an effective computer program?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Debugging programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Analysing a problem to generate a programmable solution</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Term 5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Exploring the different career options that use Computing skills</td>
<td>What computing skills do I need in the world of work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Using spreadsheet skills (functions &amp; formulas)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Understanding databases and queries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Term 6</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Using Python with Turtle to create spirographs and pieces of art.</td>
<td>Can programming be artistic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Students will work on a group project.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Assessment: Computing**

At the end of each unit, students will be assessed on their understanding of the topic and their ability to apply the knowledge in various scenarios using a quiz-based assessment. Feedback and Grades for the unit will be provided via an email by the class teacher. Pupils will keep an electronic portfolio of their work and...
progress that can be accessed from home and school; this can be updated with comments by the teacher and self.

Pupils are encouraged to self- and peer-assess during the course of each unit (game completion, successful website etc.). The scheme of work for each topic will involve students in whole : class teaching and discussion as well as group work, individual responses and independent enquiry. All work will be maintained electronically and students will not be expected to have physical folders. Students will be expected to keep their computer files well-organised with clear labels and to submit work on time for deadlines.

**Progression: Computing**
Work in Computing will be graded in line with the school assessment policy of awarding an Attainment grade between A and D and an Attitude to Learning grade between 1 and 4. To achieve a grade A in Year 8 we would expect students to show rapidly developing programming skills and a high understanding of the Computing issues that are discussed in class.

**Homework: Computing**
Homework is set on a fortnightly basis but does not always involve the use of a computer. Homework can often be research-related, be a follow-on from the classwork or evaluation activity from the content of that day’s lesson. Pupils are encouraged to keep up to date with technology news so that it can be used in class discussions and update their electronic portfolio with opinions on current technological news as well as classwork and homework.

**Websites: Computing**
- [https://repl.it/](https://repl.it/) - Free platform to create programs using Python (any of the popular programming languages).
- [http://www.serif.com](http://www.serif.com) – free trial downloads of software
- [https://www.python.org/](https://www.python.org/) - free download of Python software
- [https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zve9q6f](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zve9q6f) - KS3 Computer Science
- [http://www.bbc.co.uk/technology](http://www.bbc.co.uk/technology) - Latest technology news

**How parents can help: Computing**
To participate fully in our technology driven society, students need to be competent users of computers and they also need to develop an awareness of how computers are shaping our society and influencing our lifestyle. Keeping up to date with the latest technology related stories in the news will always help. Students will benefit from having a home computer that has a broadband connection to the Internet to practise on their programming skills through this year. If this is not possible then they must realise that they will need to complete homework tasks on the school computers during lunchtime. Students are encouraged to use the online facilities to store files so that they can be worked on at home and in school.
Design and Technology

Course outline: Design and Technology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic focus</th>
<th>‘Big Question’ around topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Food Preparation and Nutrition** | The Art of Baking  
- To gain a wider variety of practical skills.  
- To understand the functions of ingredients used in key base recipes - bread and shortcrust pastry.  
- To improve the presentation of dishes cooked and make them more appealing.  
- To gain an understanding about the need for accuracy when preparing batches of products.  
- To further improve organisation and the ability to work independently. |
| | How can we use baking to produce a range of different products? |
| | Length: Runs throughout the whole year |

| **Fashion and Textiles** | Stitch and Slash  
- To create a unique and one off fashion structure, using architecture as inspiration.  
- To learn a number of constructed textiles techniques (including pleats and tucks, slashing and weaving).  
- To understand how to develop unique and exciting fashion designs in response to primary and secondary research. |
| | Are there parallel practices in fashion and architecture? |
| | Length: Runs throughout the whole year |

| **Product Design** | Design Movements  
- To understand a broad range of design movements, their history and their influence on product design.  
- To strengthen practical skills through the introduction of new material areas and manufacturing processes.  
- To develop an understanding of the importance of precision and accuracy, and the purpose of quality control checks.  
- To understand how design development involves modelling, testing, change and risk taking, and that failure should be viewed in a positive light to help improve the design. |
| | What influences the design of a product? |
| | Length: Runs throughout the whole year |

During their second year students will continue to study Food Preparation and Nutrition; Textiles; and Design and Technology (Product Design). All subjects will build upon the students’ knowledge explored in
their previous schemes of work such as: practical skills; understanding of ingredients; materials; processes; and techniques. There will be opportunities this year to work with a wider range of materials, components, ingredients, tools and equipment. Teaching and learning will be challenging and robust, consisting of a variety of formal skills teaching including: ‘learning through doing’ focused practical activities; skills building; research methods and tasks; analytical skills; “big picture” questioning; and reflective evaluations (self, peer and group opportunities). There will be continued use of thinking skills methodology, in particular creativity, problem solving and persistence.

In all three subjects students will be involved in four key areas of work. These are:

- Investigating, researching, analysing.
- Creating, designing, developing.
- Making activities.
- Testing and evaluating.

The work covered is such that students may be required to work on a combination of these key areas at any one time.

**Assessment: Design and Technology**

Assessment will consist of a variety of methods, including:

- Ongoing peer and self assessment.
- Whole class, group, and one to one discussions to develop work.
- Attitude to Learning grades.
- Formal marking, written comments with guidance on how to improve.
- Summative assessment of practical work.
- End of year examination.

For assessment to be meaningful, students are required to evidence a direct response to their feedback. For example, this may take the form of, but not exclusively, setting and monitoring their own targets; re-visiting the piece of work to make the necessary improvements; or demonstrating/exploring development of practical work. Assessment recording will be done in-line with the whole school assessment policy.

**Progression: Design and Technology**

Work in Design and Technology will be graded in line with the school assessment policy of awarding an Attainment grade between A and D and an Attitude to Learning grade between 4 and 1. In order to reach the attainment grade, students will need to demonstrate a high level of analytical skills in their research and a maturity and originality in their designing and planning. In the practical work, students will need to demonstrate high level making and finishing skills, paying particular attention to detail and accuracy.

**Homework: Design and Technology**

Homework will take a variety of formats and may include, but not exclusively:

- A short research or design activity needed for the next lesson.
- A longer research activity to develop an understanding of a particular topic.
- An extended study requiring careful management of time.
- Planning/preparation for lessons, including weighing out ingredients at home.
- Undertaking a manufacturing diary.
- Evaluations of practical outcomes.
- Watching a documentary or television programme which relates to the topic being studied.

**Websites: Design and Technology**

- [www.designandtech.com](http://www.designandtech.com)
- [www.technologystudent.co.uk](http://www.technologystudent.co.uk)
- [www.foodforum.org.uk](http://www.foodforum.org.uk)
Additional useful websites will be given out during individual subject lessons.

**How parents and carers can help: Design and Technology**

Parents and carers can help their daughters’ learning through a mixture of trips and visits, being given the chance to develop their cooking skills at home, safe access to both graphical software and websites on the home computer, encouraging their daughter to question the design of products, observation of the use of materials and the functions provided in common everyday products.

The department aims to help parents/carers by supplying as much as we can to allow students to make a speedy start to projects with appropriate high quality materials and resources specific to the topics. Most of the resources are single use, therefore we would be appreciative of ensuring that your daughter has access to these by **completing the contributions letter sent home and returning it with payment as soon as possible**. Costings are calculated to ensure that these are the absolute minimum for the provision of the materials. On occasions your daughter will be required to provide additional decorative or specialist materials to enhance her practical work.

The recipes for Food Preparation and Nutrition are in student booklets. It will be necessary for parents to provide ingredients for their daughters to use along with a suitable container to store/take home the products made. We would also be grateful if you could refrain from organising and weighing out/measuring the ingredients required for each practical lesson for your daughter. This task forms part of her homework and encouraging her to do this herself will ensure that she knows exactly which ingredients she has with her for the lesson and also gives an opportunity to read and understand the recipe beforehand. **All ingredients must be weighed out at home, prior to the lesson.** Students must place their ingredients on their allocated shelf/in the fridge in the room C002 **before** the start of the school day and any food made (or spare ingredients) must remain in room C002 until 3.30pm. **Please note that students are not allowed to take food made in lessons out of the room before the end of the school day.** This is to ensure that all food remains safe to eat and to prevent any problems for those students who may have an allergic reaction to ingredients used. Food, ingredients and containers that are not collected will be disposed of after **two days** so please encourage your daughter to collect them on the day of her practical lesson.

Design and Technology is a fast paced, ever evolving discipline. In order to help your daughter keep up to date with the latest technologies, it would be helpful if the correct terminology is used at home. Although as parents you may be more familiar with calling it ‘wood tech’, ‘metal work’ or ‘home economics’, the subject has progressed an awfully long way in recent years! At MGGS we study the following disciplines within Design and Technology:

- Product Design
- Food Preparation and Nutrition
- Fashion and Textiles

**Drama**

**Course outline: Drama**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Topic focus</th>
<th>‘Big Question’ around topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term 1</td>
<td>Darkwood Manor</td>
<td>‘How can we use our bodies and voices to create different atmospheres?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td>Exploring practitioners</td>
<td>‘What is the purpose of theatre?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3</td>
<td>Storytelling</td>
<td>‘What influence can the performance space have on the actor/audience relationship?’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As a department we feel it is imperative that we give the pupils as broad an experience of Drama as possible. Each of the topic areas explores a ‘big question’ which provides a focus for the unit and the opportunity for personal enquiry. In September your daughter will be given a copy of the descriptors that we use to assess students. The pupils’ work is considered under the following headings:

- **Creating** - Exploring, devising, shaping and interpreting.
- **Performing** - Presenting and applying knowledge and understanding in practical work
- **Responding** - Evaluating and analysing process and performance

A detailed explanation of each of the stages of achievement will be given to your daughter in September.

We aim not only to expose your daughter to a multitude of theatrical techniques but also to nurture group based learning which will aid the development of pupils’ confidence. The cohort will need to learn to trust and support one another; leadership qualities of negotiation, compromise, fairness and responsibility are all honed here. We strongly believe Drama at MGGS develops valuable transferable skills for our students in a thought provoking and supportive environment.

Embedded within the course is the development of thinking skills. Much of what we do in Drama utilises and supports the development of independent thinking skills and we are able to make the development of these skills explicit in the teaching of Drama.

Throughout the course our focus is on the creativity of the individual and the course offers pupils opportunities to develop a sense of ownership and pride in the work they develop. We encourage pupils to consider the social, cultural, historic and political aspects of the characters and situations explored. We are pleased to say that, according to past pupils, we manage to achieve this and have fun along the way!

**Assessment: Drama**

Verbal feedback will regularly be given to all pupils on many aspects of their work, from the level of their participation and confidence, to a critique of their performance skills in a formal assessment. Written feedback and formal assessment of the level the student is working at will be given after core assessments.

Alongside their practical exploration of drama, pupils will continue to record their reflections in the Drama Diary that they started in year 7. This should be brought to each lesson. It is important that this diary is a **personal exploration** of their experiences in drama; they can present their reflections and evaluations in any way they see fit as long as they are proud of the final result.

At the end of the academic year we hope the pupils will have created a diary brimming with personal reflections, knowledge, self-assessments and passion, showing their journey through drama in Year 8. Diaries will be taken in at certain points during the term to monitor progress and teacher’s evaluations of performances will be added. House points will be awarded for excellent work throughout the year.

Drama is a practical subject and assessments will be made of the pupils’ performance skills as we move through the year. Frequent constructive verbal feedback will be given to pupils throughout lessons from the teacher and through peer assessment. In addition to this pupils will be expected to display their knowledge and understanding in reflective discussions at key moments. Pupils will also be encouraged to assess their
own and others’ work in performance using a common set of criteria, as well as develop their critical and reflective skills in response to performance.

**Progression: Drama**
We expect most of our pupils in Year 8 to be working at a B (using the MGGS Attainment grading system). We will note each individual’s attainment each Kent term as well as giving regular opportunities to reflect on work. In order to achieve the highest standards of work pupils will need to demonstrate outstanding collaborative skills and sensitivity within a group, confident application of practical skills and an analytical approach to responding to their own and others’ performances.

**Homework: Drama**
Drama homework will take various forms and including reflecting on lesson activities in their portfolios, drawing designs for masks or costumes, learning lines, completing research or bringing in simple props or costume for a performance. We find that pupils who are passionate about the subject enjoy doing extra work on their diaries outside of the classroom, creating a varied scrapbook of their experience of theatre visits or clubs and this initiative and enthusiasm is always commended.

**Websites: Drama**
Musical Theatre: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/music/music_20th_century/music_theatre1.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/music/music_20th_century/music_theatre1.shtml)
Current events in UK theatre, a great source of information on productions, actors, courses and opportunities: [http://www.thestage.co.uk](http://www.thestage.co.uk)
Although aimed at GCSE students, the BBC Bitesize website details some of the techniques Year 8 will be introduced to this year and is fun and accessible: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/drama/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/drama/)
The Theatre Museum collections formerly held in the Covent Garden premises are now held by the Victoria and Albert Museum, and their website is interesting and extensive [http://www.vam.ac.uk/page/t/theatre-and-performance/](http://www.vam.ac.uk/page/t/theatre-and-performance/)

**How parents can help: Drama**
Drama explores what it is to be human, in its broadest sense. Encouraging pupils to use their imaginations and to broaden their reading habits are both useful tools for use across the curriculum. Seeing live theatre is also a way to spark pupils imagination but by simply supporting and encouraging your daughter you will be nurturing them as a potential performer.

**English**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Topic focus</th>
<th>‘Big Question’ around topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Novel study: for example, ‘Boy in the Striped Pyjamas’ / ‘Harry Potter.’</td>
<td>What is evil?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td>Poetry anthology</td>
<td>What is poetry and poetic ‘craft”?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3</td>
<td>Shakespeare context and play text, for example: ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’</td>
<td>Why is Shakespeare so important?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 4</td>
<td>Shakespeare: ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 5</td>
<td>Non-fiction and media</td>
<td>Analytical writing - examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 6</td>
<td>Debating and speech-writing /Advertising</td>
<td>What is rhetoric? How influential is the media?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students will study a programme covering a range of skills, topics and texts. They will have access to poetry, plays and many novels, as MGGS is passionate about encouraging wider reading.
**Term 1: Novel**
In this unit students will study a whole novel, reading sections together as a class, exploring and analysing major characters, settings and plot developments, and gaining an understanding of literary techniques and devices. Teachers choose from a range of available novels, including modern classics such as ‘The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas’ and ‘Harry Potter.’ A range of creative writing exercises, speaking and listening activities and individual reading tasks will be used throughout the unit.

**Term 2: Poetry anthology**
The study of poetry is always extremely popular with our students. This unit builds upon the language and imagery skills developed in Year 7 and introduces students to a more advanced range of poetic forms, structures and techniques. The unit focuses on the theme of the natural world and the environment is explored through a variety of wonderful poems, resulting in students creating their own poems based upon the study of endangered species.

**Term 3: Shakespeare whole-text study: texts in context**
Students study an entire Shakespeare play, reading key scenes as a class, analysing Shakespeare’s language and imagery, and developing drama skills. The most popular choice is ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’. This unit provides excellent preparation for the study of Shakespeare at GCSE and A-Level.

**Term 4: Shakespeare whole-text study and assessment** (continuation of above and written assessment)

**Term 5: Non-fiction and creative writing**
An understanding of media language is vital to the contemporary English curriculum at both Key Stages 3 and 4. This unit allows students to develop their skills of analysis in reading and writing and prepares them for their end of year examination, which is modelled on the AQA Language Paper 1 (Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing).

**Term 6: Debating and speech-writing/advertising**
Students study the formal art of rhetoric, analysing speeches and debating in the media, and building an understanding of how to construct an argument. There is also an opportunity for students to examine the language and construction of advertisements in the media and print culture, facilitating discussion and analysis of how audiences make meanings from media products, considering elements such as generic conventions, cultural representations and narrative structures.

**Assessment: English**
Year 8 core and common assessments are outlined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core assessments</th>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Term 2</th>
<th>Term 3</th>
<th>Term 4</th>
<th>Term 5</th>
<th>Term 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analytical essay</td>
<td>Poetry anthology and critical commentary</td>
<td>Creative project/ Creative writing (500 word story)</td>
<td>Analysis of drama text/ Speaking &amp; Listening</td>
<td>Analytical writing - EXAM</td>
<td>Creative writing- non-fiction/ Speaking and Listening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional assessments common to all classes**
Marking of major pieces will consist of positive comments and targets for progression. All such work will be assessed using the MGGS attainment grade descriptors.
Notes may be looked at and ticked, or peer-assessed. Self-reflection and target-setting arrangements and time are built into the Year 8 scheme of work.

**Progression: English**

We expect most of our students to arrive in Year 8 as secure MGGS attainment grade B, though some will already meet some of the criteria for Grade A. The skills that students need to develop and exhibit will depend on the specific task set, however the main criteria are:

**Speaking and Listening**

**MGGS attainment grade B:** students talk and listen confidently in a wide range of contexts, including some that are formal. Their talk engages the interest of the listener as they begin to vary their expression and vocabulary. In discussions, they pay close attention to what others say, ask questions to develop ideas and make contributions that take account of others’ views. They adapt their spoken language to suit the situation and begin to use standard English in formal situations.

**MGGS attainment grade A:** students adapt their talk to the demands of different contexts, purposes and audiences with increasing confidence. Their talk engages the interest of the listener through the variety and liveliness of both vocabulary and expression. Students take an active part in discussions, taking different roles and showing understanding of ideas and sensitivity to others. They demonstrate their knowledge of language variety and usage effectively and use standard English fluently in formal situations.

**Reading**

**MGGS attainment grade B:** students show understanding of a range of texts, selecting essential points and using inference and deduction where appropriate. In their responses, they identify key features, themes and characters and select sentences, phrases and relevant information to support their views. They understand that texts fit into historical and literary traditions. They retrieve and collate information from a range of sources.

**MGGS attainment grade A:** in reading and discussing a range of texts, students identify different layers of meaning and comment on their significance and effect. They give personal responses to literary texts, referring to aspects of language, structure and themes in justifying their views, and making connections between texts from different times and cultures and their own experiences. They summarise a range of information from different sources.

**Writing**

**MGGS attainment grade B:** writing is varied and interesting, conveying meaning clearly in a range of forms for different readers, using a more formal style where appropriate. Vocabulary choices are imaginative and words are used precisely. Sentences, including complex ones, and paragraphs are coherent, clear and well developed. Words with complex regular patterns are usually spelt correctly. A range of punctuation, including commas, apostrophes and inverted commas, is usually used accurately. Handwriting is joined, clear and fluent and, where appropriate, is adapted to a range of tasks.

**MGGS attainment grade A:** writing is fluent and often engages and sustains the reader’s interest, showing some adaptation of style and register to different forms, including using an impersonal style where appropriate. Students experiment with a range of sentence structures and varied vocabulary to create effects. Spelling, including that of irregular words, is generally accurate. Handwriting is neat and legible. A range of punctuation is usually used correctly to clarify meaning, and ideas are organised into well-developed, linked paragraphs.
Homework: English
The school homework timetable will of course be followed, and students will find that they may be set a variety of homework tasks: research, preparation, reading and writing. When longer pieces of work are set, students will be given one week to complete them in order to help them get used to planning and structuring extended writing.

Websites: English
http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks3bitesize/
An excellent site for a range of games, quizzes and skills based learning
http://www.timesspellingbee.co.uk/
A fantastic site to develop spelling and word skills. Great fun too!
http://funschool.kaboose.com/index.html
More games and activities to build confidence with spelling, punctuation and grammar.

How parents can help: English
The best way to improve the vocabulary and accuracy of your daughter's writing is to encourage her to read widely. The school library is a fantastic source of contemporary and classic literature, as well as magazines, journals and newspapers. There are many local literary connections that are worth exploring for a fun day out, including the annual Dickens Festival in Rochester or the Canterbury Tales experience in Canterbury.

Geography

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course outline: Year 8 Geography</th>
<th>'Big Question’ around topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Term 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic focus</td>
<td>'Big Question’ around topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population and migration</td>
<td>How is the global population changing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Term 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global and local economics</td>
<td>What is an economy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic focus</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa and adaptations fieldwork.</td>
<td>What are the challenges and opportunities facing Africa?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Term 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coasts</td>
<td>What happens when the land meets the sea?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Term 4</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>Why is the Middle East an important world region?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Term 5</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime</td>
<td>What is the Geography of Crime?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Term 6</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A high-quality Geography education aims to inspire in students a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. We aim to equip students with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth’s key physical and human processes. As students’ progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge provides the tools and approaches that explain how the Earth’s features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

The KS3 National Curriculum for Geography aims to ensure that all students:

- develop contextual knowledge of the location of places, seas and oceans, including their defining physical and human characteristics
understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time
are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes
interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps and writing at length.

In Year 8 we aim for students to build on the strong foundation in core geographical knowledge and skills gained in Year 7.

Assessment: Geography
There are three aspects of achievement in geography:
1. **Contextual world knowledge** of locations, places and geographical features.
2. **Understanding** of the conditions, processes and interactions that explain geographical features, distribution patterns, and changes over time and space.
3. Competence in **geographical enquiry**, and the application of **skills** in observing, collecting, analysing, evaluating and communicating geographical information.

Students will be assessed by means of one core assessment for the units on Population, Economics, Africa, Coasts, The Middle East, Crime and an end of year examination. These will be marked using the MGGS Attainment grade system A (Exceptional) to D (Below our expectations). Work completed in lessons, core assessments and homework will also be awarded these attainment grades. These grades will vary from each piece of work, depending on the nature of the task and how well your daughter has completed it.

Each assessment will provide an opportunity for students to reflect upon their work and identify how they can improve. A student progress tracking sheet is also issued at the start of the year to enable students to identify areas of strengths but also areas for improvement. In addition, peer and self-assessment is to help students to appreciate what is required to achieve a particular grade and, more importantly, how to improve her grade. These are always moderated by staff to ensure consistency and accuracy.

Progression: Geography
In order to improve students need to start providing not only organisation and appropriate detail (with examples) in their answers but also to provide reasons, showing complex links between aspects studied. Justification of decisions and providing evidence to support points is also critical. The quality of language, too, is important, with a confident use of correct terminology.

By the end of Year 8 pupils should:
- Have a good and improving knowledge relating to a wide range of places, environments and features at a variety of appropriate spatial scales, extending from local to global.
- Have an emerging understanding of the physical and human conditions and processes which lead to the development of, and change in, a variety of geographical features, systems and places. They can begin to explain various ways in which places are linked and the impact such links have on people and environments. They can begin to make connections between different geographical phenomena they have studied.
- Be able, with support, to choose and use a wide range of data to help investigate, interpret, make judgements and draw conclusions about geographical questions, issues and problems, and express and engage with different points of view about these.
Homework: Geography
Homework may be set as a variety of tasks – sometimes it will be a consolidation exercise to ensure that the work done in class is fully understood, sometimes it will be learning for a test and sometimes a more creative piece in response to the work done in school. In addition we use homework for students to prepare themselves for assessments which are completed in class or for students to complete the assessment at home. A range of methods are used in each topic in order to assess the variety of skills covered in the course. It would be expected that some research is done on each topic – either through books and newspaper articles or via computers.

Websites: Geography
www.bbc.co.uk – this always has excellent links for places in the news and there is specific KS3 information e.g. http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks3/geography/
www.multimap.co.uk is excellent for investigating different sorts of maps as is Google Earth and www.worldmapper.org is an amazing site showing how countries compare and it has a wealth of data. http://lizardpoint.com/geography/africa-quiz.php is very helpful for learning the countries of Africa (and there are links for other regions of the world too)

Pupils will be directed to specific sites relating to topics covered.

How parents and carers can help: Geography
Geography is about the world around us – it helps explain the past, it illuminates the present and helps us plan for the future. Listening to the news and reading broadsheet newspapers helps to provide a broad general knowledge which will stand students in good stead (as would looking at www.bbc.co.uk).

Core assessments are critical for helping us all identify how your daughter is progressing. If your daughter misses an assessment she may need to do this at home under controlled conditions (i.e. your supervision) – we hope you will support us in this. Similarly it is important to ensure that if your daughter has any absence, then you encourage her to copy up any notes or collect information about the work as soon as she returns to school. Pupils who develop good habits at Key Stage 3 turn into far more responsible and high-achieving pupils later on.

Using a computer to research is good, using it discriminately is better. Setting your daughter a task of finding out information about a specific country that you may be visiting on holiday or that is currently in the news will provide a focus and also improve her geographical knowledge and her ability to ask and answer questions – such as ‘Is the Grand Canyon Skywalk a step too far?’, ‘What advantages and disadvantages does modern technology bring to people in developing countries?’ or ‘Why can some deserts be cold?’

History

Course outline: History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Topic focus</th>
<th>‘Big Question’ around topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The British Empire</td>
<td>What are the similarities and differences between countries within the British Empire? What are the positives and negatives of British rule?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term 2</th>
<th>The Transatlantic Slave Trade</th>
<th>What is the significance of the slave trade?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Industrial Revolution</td>
<td>What can we learn from sources about life in the industrial revolution?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Term 3 | Depth Study: Whitechapel and Jack the Ripper | What can we learn from sources about the murders? |
Why did the police fail to catch Jack the Ripper?

Term 4
Crime and Punishment through Time
How has the definition of crime and punishment changed throughout British History?

Term 5
The First World War
Why did WW1 break out?
Why did the Allies win the battle of the Somme?
Why were the consequences of the war?

Term 6
The Russian Revolution
Why is the development of communism significant?

**Topic 1: The British Empire**
**Key Skill: Similarity and Difference**
Students will explore how the British Empire impacted people living in Britain and the colonies, with a focus on Ireland, Australia, India, South Africa and the 13 Colonies. Students will independently investigate one country within the empire to consider how it was conquered and the positive and negatives of British rule. They will share their research with their peers and identify similarities and differences between the countries.

**Topic 2: The Transatlantic Slave Trade**
**Key Skill: Significance**
Students will study the key aspects of the slave trade including the trade triangle, Middle Passage, Auctions, Planations and Abolition Movement. They will use this knowledge to assess why it is significant to study the slave trade and what lesson can be learnt from it.

**Topic 3: The Industrial Revolution**
**Key Skill: Source Analysis**
This is a short study exploring some of the key industrial changes of the 1800s, such as the development of factories and the railways. Students will use their knowledge of these changes to assess the utility of historical sources from the time.

**Topic 4: Jack the Ripper**
**Key Skill: Source Analysis**
Students will explore what it was like live in Whitechapel and why the context of the 1880s made it difficult for the police to catch one of the most renowned serial killers. In this unit students will cross reference a range of primary source material to form their own judgements about who the Ripper could have been and whether the evidence received by the police was real or fake. They will also assess the utility of historical sources depicting why the Ripper was never caught.

**Topic 5: Crime and Punishment Through Time**
**Key Skill: Change and Continuity**
This is a study across approximately 2000 years of British History. Starting with Roman Britain and ending with the 20th century. Students will explore how the definitions of crime and punishment have changed across time. Key features will include crimes such as witchcraft and theft and punishments such as transportation and the bloody code.

**Topic 6: The First World War**
**Key skill: Cause and Consequence**
Students will explore why the war broke out in 1914, and assess the importance and value of different short
term and long term causes. They will also investigate the experience of soldiers living on the Western front (students will be given the option to independently research another area of the war). The battle of the Somme will be a key focus, looking at how tactics changed and brought the war closer to an end. Finally they will look at the consequences of war, particularly the Treaty of Versailles (which will provide a foundation to the study of WW2 in Year 9)

Topic 7: The Russian Revolution
Key skill: Significance
This unit is a brief introduction into the development of communism in the 20th century, and provides the foundation to students' study of later topics, such as the Cold War in Year 9 and Conflict and Tension in Asia in Year 10. Students will look at the rule of the Tsar, Russian involvement in WW1, the fall of monarchy and development of communism under Lenin and Stalin. They will consider why the growth of communist was significant to 20th century world history.

Assessment: History
The work of Year 8 students will be marked with grades A-D. Students will complete core assessments to indicate progress. Core assessments will assess different skills, so students will not necessarily indicate consistent progress from assessment to assessment. Core assessments can test any combination of the following skills:
- The ability to communicate effectively
- The ability to use evidence from students’ own knowledge to support an argument
- The ability to explain this evidence
- The ability to create a substantiated judgement
- The ability to infer from historical sources
- The ability to assess the reliability and usefulness of evidence
- The ability to apply and understand second order concepts, including cause and consequence, change and continuity, similarity and differences and historical significance.

Some of the assessment students will sit in year 8 will be styled in the form of GCSE exam questions in order to provide students will a strong foundation for their studies at KS4. They will develop these skills into year 9.

Progression: History
Our Year 8 students are generally expected to gain B and A grades in their core assessments. Assessments and lesson content will increase in challenge across Key Stage 3, therefore students achieving the same grades in each assessment are making progress. A grades will reflect students who are working beyond our expectations, while C grades will show that students have understood elements of the skills and knowledge being tested, but require more practise and development. Students in Year 8 gaining D grades will have misunderstood the concepts of the assessment or not have acted effectively on instructions and advice. Students will always receive specific feedback on their core assessments to show them how to further develop their understanding and skills.

Homework: History
Students will receive homework every two weeks. This will be set electronically via google classroom. Some of this will be assessed by their teacher, while some will be assessed in class. Homework tasks are designed to support and consolidate students' understanding of knowledge and key skills. Tasks will include research projects, research sheets, spelling revisions, revision worksheets and activities designed to develop exam skills.
**Websites: History**

Students should be very selective when researching, recording and using only the information that is relevant to their enquiry, not printing off vast swathes of unread text. This is a skill that will be taught in class. Some useful websites include:

https://spartacus-educational.com/
http://timelines.tv/
http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/shows/horrible-histories (For amusing clips and songs for all time periods)

**How parents and carers can help: History**

- Encouraging students to read historical fiction and discuss the story with them.
- Reading or watching the news develops students’ interest in the world's problems and their origins and can foster an atmosphere of household debate.
- Working through homework tasks will students, particularly the assessed ones
- Asking students to discuss what they are learning in class and what they have found most interesting

**Mathematics**

Students are taught in sets in Year 8 to enable each of them to work at a suitable pace. They have six Mathematics lessons per fortnight. The work covered in Year 8 builds on that of Year 7. Students will learn about Mathematics in the context of real-life issues. All topics are linked to “big question” themes and these will help to enrich students’ experiences of mathematics. The “big questions” explored in Year 8 are:

**Course outline: Mathematics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Topic focus</th>
<th>‘Big Question’ around topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Form and solve both linear and simultaneous equations, use the formula for the equation of a line, understand gradient &amp; what makes two lines parallel on a graph, find the nth term of a linear sequence, expand double brackets &amp; factorise quadratic expressions, solve inequalities.</td>
<td>What is algebra for?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Properties of 3D shapes, find the volume &amp; surface area of 3D shapes, apply Pythagoras’ Theorem to solve problems in 2D &amp; 3D, draw the net of prisms, problem solve with area and volume.</td>
<td>Can you pack it in?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plan &amp; elevation views, draw 3D shapes on isometric paper, translation, reflection, rotation, enlargement, constructing triangles.</td>
<td>Is there beauty in shape?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Calculate with percentages multipliers, use tree diagrams to calculate probabilities of independent events, perform experiments &amp; calculate relative frequency, use conversion graphs, share in a ratio, effective use of a calculator, Venn diagrams for sorting.</td>
<td>Is it worth the risk?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Calculate the estimated mean of grouped data, draw box plots, compare sets of data, use scatter diagrams to analyse correlation, construct two-way</td>
<td>Am I healthy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 6</td>
<td>Enlarge shapes given the centre and scale factor, use the equation of a mirror line to reflect shapes, fully describe all transformations, find missing sides in similar shapes, tessellate shapes and create a tessellating pattern, use the formula for angles in polygons, explore the Golden Ratio.</td>
<td>Can you make the perfect pattern?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The department uses the Elmwood Press series of textbooks and each pupil will have access to a text book in school. The topics covered are all available on the *MyMaths* and *CIMT* websites.

In lessons pupils will experience a variety of activities, including:
- whole class discussions - which provide opportunities for students to grow in confidence and to become effective participators
- investigative work – students will gain experience of solving a range of open and closed tasks in order to develop them as independent learners and creative thinkers;
- small group work – students will have opportunities to work collaboratively with other students.

### Assessment: Mathematics

Students’ progress will be assessed on a regular basis. Students will complete a number of **core assessments** (a project, a written exercise or a test). These assessments will be marked and given a grade or a comment. Students also assess their own understanding of each topic, identifying the areas they need to develop further. They will also undertake a wide range of investigative work; these tasks will often be peer assessed which helps students to understand how they can improve their own problem solving skills.

### Progression: Mathematics

In Year 8 pupils will recap harder year 7 topics if needed. In order to achieve an A at the end of Year 8, pupils would need to demonstrate most of the following skills:
- Display full mastery of arithmetic including decimals, fractions & percentages;
- Recall and apply the formula for area & volume to solve geometry problems.
- Solve linear & simultaneous equations;
- Find the gradient and equation of a straight line;
- Solve probability problems using tree diagrams;
- Use grouped frequency tables and compare sets of data;
- Perform & describe transformations involving translation, reflection, rotation & enlargement.

### Homework: Mathematics

Mathematics homework is set once a week. Students are usually given one or two nights to complete the work. Homework can take the form of:
- arithmetic tasks, to improve speed and accuracy, accompanied by a problem solving task
- exercises to reinforce work taught in or before year 8;
- internet based homework (research or online worksheets);
- independent work to revise for a test or respond to feedback;
- investigative work;
- creative tasks (producing a poster or a booklet to explain a topic to someone else).

### Websites: Mathematics

Pupils may find the following websites a useful source of support during Year 8:
- [www.mymaths.co.uk](http://www.mymaths.co.uk)  This subscription website is extremely comprehensive and covers every aspect mathof the secondary mathematics curriculum.
How parents and carers can help: Mathematics

There are various ways in which parents and carers can support pupils with their learning:

- It is vital that your daughter is confident with her ‘times tables’ so she can complete work quickly. She needs to learn them by rote. eg once 2 is 2, two 2s are 4, so she can recall the facts quickly. eg. What two numbers multiply to make 63? Practise them as you are walking along together or driving somewhere.
- Help with learning and practising these topics will be available on the MGGS website or by using the following link: [https://www.mggs.org/admissions/information-for-new-students/maths-transition](https://www.mggs.org/admissions/information-for-new-students/maths-transition)
- There are many websites with games to make practising interesting once tables have been learnt.
- Ensure that your daughter is confident with efficient non-calculator methods of arithmetic.ie. She can add, subtract, multiply and divide integers, fractions and decimals.
- Help to develop your daughter’s mental mathematics. When shopping, ask questions about how much change to expect. Discuss mathematical concepts that are mentioned on television programmes (percentages, averages and statistical charts are often discussed in news programmes).
- Take an interest in what your daughter is learning in Mathematics. Look at her exercise book and question her about what she has learnt.
- Discuss the problem-solving challenge homework questions with her or ask her about the theme of the topics she is currently learning.
- It is fine to help your daughter with her Mathematics homework, but try to avoid the temptation of doing the questions for her. It is better to talk her through similar questions.
- Encourage your daughter to look over topics covered earlier in the school year or in year 7.
- Explain the importance of mathematics to your daughter. If applicable, share with your daughter the mathematics you use in your own job.

Modern Foreign Languages

Course outline: French

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit/ Term</th>
<th>Topic focus</th>
<th>‘Big Question’ around topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Talk about school facilities, clubs and subjects; talk about school uniform and school rules; talk about technology and homework; describe daily routine; say what you want and don’t want to do; describe a school trip you recently went on</td>
<td>School life: On va au collège?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Talk about European countries; talk about means of transport and travelling; describe places and discuss what you are going to do; talk about what one can and can’t do in various places</td>
<td>Future visit plans: On fait des projets?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Introduce and describe people; talk about staying with a family; discuss helping at home; talk about what you did and didn’t do; talk about choosing and buying presents; describe a visit; understand and answer questions in the past</td>
<td>Staying in France: On reste en famille?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit/ Term</td>
<td>Topic focus</td>
<td>‘Big Question’ around topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>talk about food and drinks; order a meal at the restaurant; find out about eating habits in French-speaking countries; talk about healthy eating</td>
<td>Food and Drinks: Qu’est-ce qu’on mange?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Talk about countries and languages; going on holiday; describing a past holiday; asking questions and giving opinions. Grammar topics include using à, en and au with towns and countries; the perfect tense with avoir and être.</td>
<td>Travel and Holidays: On part en vacances?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Talk about Health, parts of the body, going to the doctor’s surgery and chemist’s. Healthy living and lifestyle. Give advice for a better lifestyle.</td>
<td>Health ça va?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course outline: German**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit/ Term</th>
<th>Topic focus</th>
<th>‘Big Question’ around topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Talk about holidays; types of accommodation; describing a past holiday; asking questions and giving opinions. Grammar topics include the perfect tense with haben and sein; common verbs in the imperfect tense; Time Manner Place rule.</td>
<td>Holidays: Was hast du in den Ferien gemacht?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The media: Talk about TV, film and reading preferences; discuss screen time. Grammar topics include further practice of the perfect and present tense, making comparisons and modal verbs</td>
<td>Die Medien: Was für Sendungen/ Filme/ Bücher magst du?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Food and Health: talk about breakfast and typical German food; order in a restaurant or cafe; recipes; talk about healthy lifestyles. Grammar topics include modal verbs, the imperative form, practice of present and perfect tense, accusative and dative case, prepositions of movement</td>
<td>Food: Was nimmst du? Health:Bist du gesund?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A trip to Germany: Understanding rules; discussing daily routine; understand and give directions; learn about festivals in German-speaking countries. Grammar topics include modal verbs, separable and reflexive verbs, imperative form, adjective endings.</td>
<td>A class trip to Germany: Machen wir eine Klassenreise nach Deutschland?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Clothes and going out: discuss clothes and style; debate about uniforms; a fashion show; revision of key grammar and vocabulary before Y8 exams Grammar topics include wenn clauses, adjective endings, revision of 3 tenses and word order rules.</td>
<td>Clothes and going out : Wie sehe ich aus?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Y8 exams and project work on: Health - going to the doctor’s/ chemist’s and understanding healthcare and lifestyle advice; Jobs with languages - job vocabulary and formal letter writing conventions; German fairy tales with a focus on common imperfect tense forms</td>
<td>Health: Was ist los? Jobs: Welche Stelle passt? Fairy tales: Wer ist Rotkäppchen?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course outline: Spanish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit/Term</th>
<th>Topic focus</th>
<th>‘Big Question’ around topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Describing a typical day at school and at home (chores) with extended opinions. Reflexive verbs; sequencing words; the time and numbers; opinions; daily routine in the past.</td>
<td>Daily Routine ¿Cómo es mi vida diaria?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Talk about countries and languages; going on holiday. Past holidays and weather. Asking questions and giving opinions.</td>
<td>Holidays and weather ¿Qué hice en mis vacaciones?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Discuss mealtimes, food preferences, shopping for food and ordering in a restaurant.</td>
<td>Food and drink ¿Qué vamos a tomar?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Shopping for clothes and giving opinions on fashion. Talking about pocket money. Going out and making/accepting invitations. More sophisticated opinion phrases.</td>
<td>Fashion La moda, ¿es importante para mí?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Understanding information about Argentina, descriptions, family relationships, narrating events in the past.</td>
<td>Valentín - a film based in Argentina ¿Quién es Valentín?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Throughout the French, German or Spanish Year 8 courses, students will learn and use a variety of skills:

- Comprehension and translation skills
- Pair work and group work for developing speaking skills and becoming effective communicators
- Opportunities for students to be creative with language for different tasks
- Research homework about the target language country
- Students will regularly be asked to reflect on their own work and the work of others, thus improving their metacognitive skills as reflective learners

Extension, enquiry and enrichment

The MFL Department will offer students many opportunities to enrich the work they are doing. Listed below are some of the opportunities students may get to extend the core topics which they study.

- Research project into a French, Spanish or German town.
- Reading short literary texts, such as extracts from novels or poems
- Making up songs or poems.
- Listening to songs, reading magazines and watching videos or short films from the target language country.
- Opportunities to give presentations
- Access to super curricular resources on our enrichment Google Classrooms

Assessment: Modern Foreign Languages

In the MFL Department, there will be regular core assessments, corresponding to about two units of work and testing some or all of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Core assessments will be formally assessed with grades (A-D) being used alongside supportive comments and targets.

In addition to this, students should expect to receive two pieces of work (either a piece of writing or an oral presentation) per term which will be formally marked. The MFL Department will formally mark work by
giving positive comments and referring students to ‘feed forward questions’ (FFQs) which direct students to ways in which their work can be improved. Where appropriate an attainment grade (A-D) will be awarded. The MFL Department trains the students to understand these grades and to understand how they can move up to the next grade. Also, a mark out of 16 will be used where appropriate. This generally corresponds to how work will eventually be assessed at GCSE Level.

Listening and Reading assessments will generally be self or peer assessed in class and students will discuss ways in which they can improve these skills. Self and peer-assessment is used in MFL as this is an effective way to learn how to improve. Peer assessment will usually be used for speaking assessments as it allows every student to practise this skill frequently.

**Progression: Modern Foreign Languages**

Students will learn to understand and use more than one tense and will begin to use a variety of new grammatical structures and more advanced vocabulary. An integral part of doing well in a language is the ability to add detail and to go beyond a basic response. If the homework is to write about their house, students who not only describe their house but also give opinions, use connectives and unusual vocabulary and perhaps say what they do at home or add some other extra details, will be awarded the highest marks.

**Homework: Modern Foreign Languages**

Students can expect to get one piece of homework per fortnight for each language. This may be a reading, listening or grammar exercise which may be marked in class, a learning homework for a vocabulary test or preparation for a presentation which will be assessed in class.

**Websites: Modern Foreign Languages**

There are very many websites which can help your daughter learn in MFL, and she should be encouraged to carry out her own research. Some of the best, in our view, are:

**French, German and Spanish**

- [www.all-in.org.uk](http://www.all-in.org.uk)
- [www.thisislanguage.com](http://www.thisislanguage.com)
- [www.conjuguemos.com](http://www.conjuguemos.com)
- [www.languagesonline.org.uk: grammar/games/activities/exercises (Years 7 to 13)](http://www.languagesonline.org.uk: grammar/games/activities/exercises (Years 7 to 13))
- [www.language-gym.com](http://www.language-gym.com)
- [www.wordreference.com: an online](http://www.wordreference.com: an online)

**French**

- [www.quia.com/shared/french](http://www.quia.com/shared/french)
- [www.frenchteacher.net](http://www.frenchteacher.net)
- [www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french](http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french)

**German**

- [www.goethe.de](http://www.goethe.de)
- [www.bbc.co.uk/languages/german](http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/german)
- [www.funwithlanguages.vacau.com](http://www.funwithlanguages.vacau.com)

**Spanish**

- [www.espanol-extra.com](http://www.espanol-extra.com)
- [www.bbc.co.uk/languages/spanish](http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/spanish)
- [www.learnspanish.com](http://www.learnspanish.com)
How parents and carers can help: Modern Foreign Languages

- Buy your daughter a suitable dictionary
- Let her put ‘post-its’ around the house to label the vocabulary she has learnt.
- If you have the opportunity, watch a TV channel in the language she is studying or listen to a foreign radio station.
- Allow her to access foreign music via Spotify or other streaming services.
- Research has shown that the best and most effective way to learn a foreign language is ‘little but often’, e.g. do not force your daughter to learn vocabulary for hours on end but encourage her to learn it in small ‘chunks’ and to revise on a regular basis.
- Learn and ‘test’ vocabulary with her.
- Ask your daughter what topic she is working on – she will probably be pleased to try and teach you.
- Take an interest in French, German or Spanish events in the news, and try to pick up any associated vocabulary.
- Encourage her to check her spelling carefully.

……and of course let her talk to you in her newly learnt language! – even if you don’t understand. Young linguists like to ‘show off’ and impress…and why not? Finally, the best way to really encourage your daughter to learn a language is to take her on a trip to that country. Encourage her to do the shopping, order the drinks, and encourage her to learn the language that is going on around her. You may like to take out a subscription to the ‘Mary Glasgow’ language magazines (www.maryglasgowplus.com) but if you do, try to find time to look through the magazine with her. Many of our students are very willing to do some independent learning, but they all like to be encouraged to do so! Whatever you do please be positive, encouraging and do listen and read your daughter’s work (even if you don’t understand it all!).

Music

Course Outline: Music

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Topic focus</th>
<th>‘Big Question’ around topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term 1</td>
<td>Music of the Caribbean</td>
<td>‘What is Reggae’?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td>Variations</td>
<td>‘How can you write a variation’?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3</td>
<td>Variations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 4</td>
<td>Blues</td>
<td>‘How is music Blue’?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 5</td>
<td>Blues/ Blues into Jazz</td>
<td>‘How did Blues affect popular music?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 6</td>
<td>Ambient Music</td>
<td>‘How can you create effective background music?’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In lessons, students will learn and develop their knowledge and understanding of composing, performing, listening and appraising through inter-related activities. Students will have opportunities to develop personal learning and thinking skills by working alone or collaboratively in pairs or as part of a group, researching a topic or a brief, planning, preparing and rehearsing for a performance, refining musical ideas, extending and developing creative ideas and performing a finished piece. They will be involved in performing their own music or the music of others, creating and developing their own musical ideas, listening to and evaluating their own music and music by others to learn about different musical styles and conventions, how to use musical ideas to express a mood or for a defined expressive purpose and how music reflects the context and time in which it was composed.

Each of the topic areas explores a ‘big question’ which provides a focus for the unit and the opportunity for personal enquiry. There are links with different subjects within each unit, and extension and enrichment
opportunities are provided through performances and workshops. Outside the classroom, there is a wide range of extra-curricular musical activities available to suit all interests and levels. These provide enrichment and extension opportunities with concerts and performances given within the school and community, for example, assembly performance, the Christmas Carol Service and performances with other schools. Pupils can also take advantage of the small group instrumental lessons run by the school and involving teachers from Kent Music. The school also provides accommodation for pupils to have individual lessons with Kent Music.

**Assessment: Music**

Students will be assessed in a variety of ways. During each lesson, aural feedback of examples of work in progress will be given to help students to develop their work. At the end of each unit a core listening or appraising exercise will be set. Students work will be appraised in the combined areas of composing and performing and a verbal or written comment will be given which will be contained in a ‘feedback’ book. The department will continue to use former level descriptors and twice a year both student and teacher will review work so far and complete a levels ‘ladder’ which will help students to assess their progress and identify targets for development.

**Progression: Music**

In Music there is often a wide range of abilities. Some students will have had limited musical experience, while others may not only have had regular music lessons but may also have had the opportunity to develop their skills through instrumental and/or theory lessons. It is worth pointing out that in Music a single NC level is given for all of the combined activities: Composing, Performing, Listening and Appraising, and while a student may show strengths in one area, performing for example, they will also need to show a measured understanding in the other related activities in order to achieve a particular level.

The likely range of NC levels by the end of Year 8 in Music is between 4 and 6, with the expectancy that most students will have reached a level 5. In order to achieve a level 5, students should compose short pieces based on simple structural and expressive devices and develop ways of notating their ideas. They will be able to perform with control and expression, both individually and as members of a group. They will demonstrate an awareness of, and differences in musical styles and structures in their compositions, performances and in Listening and Appraising.

**Homework: Music**

Different types of homework are set throughout the year. Students are asked to explore and research topics within each unit and produce a poster which uses their own words and pictures to express some aspect of the unit. This research based homework is a theme which runs throughout each unit. ICT is the most common way of researching work, but students are not expected to just print off information, but to think of how to use it to express a point of view, or to summarise their understanding of a particular topic.

Some homework will be based on specific tasks, eg learning a rhythm or notation work, musical vocabulary or planning compositions. This type of homework may be to develop a composition or practical work in progress, or assessed as a test in the next lesson. Students will be made aware of the nature of the homework and when they will be tested, if applicable.

The department has also established a series of Theory exercises and Appraisal discussion areas on the school’s Fronter system. This will sometimes be used for homework and differentiation tasks. In the Theory room exercises are designed to take students through to grade 5.
Websites: Music
For practical activities and information that you can all find fun and informative try www.topmarks.co.uk. When you access this site select Music from the list of choices down the left-hand side of the page (yes, there are other subjects, too). This site contains lots of information, listening opportunities and much more!

How parents and carers can help: Music
If you would like your daughter to receive individual instrumental or vocal lessons with our main providers, Kent Music, details and application forms are available online at www.kent-music.com

If you wish to take advantage of our small group lessons, please contact the school. Letters and application forms are available on parent mail and as a hard copy.

The Music Department runs a large number of extra-curricular clubs, and we would recommend that your daughter joins at least one of the activities on offer. Group activities like these are a great way of developing musical skills. In music lessons, we often find that students who are learning a solo instrument, the keyboard or piano, for example, or who do not play in a group often find it difficult to keep in time and balance their part within a group. When we play alone it is commonplace to adjust tempo, possibly without even realising it, and who can tell a drummer she is too loud if she is practising on her own?

Ensemble skills are an important part of Music and music lessons! Whether your daughter plays a musical instrument or not, it is recommended that she joins at least one of the school’s choirs; not only is the voice central to NC activities, it is a wonderful way of developing listening skills and confidence.

Finally, it is important to remember that the Music curriculum is based on the combined activities of composing, performing, listening and appraising, and aims to develop the greater breadth of musical understanding. Visits to concerts; encouraging listening to a wide range of musical styles, live, recorded, on the radio; discussing favourite or unfamiliar music; talking about the background or context of music (your own experiences) are all worthwhile and important activities in developing the sort of musical breadth and understanding covered in key stage 3.

Physical Education

MGGS has developed a high-quality Physical Education curriculum to enable all students to enjoy and succeed. The curriculum allows students to develop a wide range of skills and the ability to use tactics, strategies and compositional ideas to perform successfully. When students are performing, they will learn to think about what they are doing, analyse the situation and make decisions. Students will also learn how to reflect on their own and others’ performances and develop ways to improve. As a result, students will build their confidence to succeed and excel in a number of different physical activities and gain an understanding of the importance of leading a healthy, active lifestyle.

Course outline: Physical Education
The curriculum will include activities which cover the following areas:
- outwitting opponents, as in games activities (both team and individual)
- accurate replication of actions, phrases and sequences, as in gymnastics and dance activities
- exploring and communicating ideas, concepts and emotions, as in dance and gymnastics activities
- performing at maximum levels in relation to speed, height, distance, strength or accuracy, as in athletic
- activities
In Year 8 students will be taught the following activities on a carousel:

Striking and fielding, dance, football, gymnastics, hockey, netball, athletics, fitness and badminton.

The aim of this range of activities is to broaden students' knowledge, skills and understanding. It will allow all students to develop their confidence and become effective learners who make high levels of progress and achievement. The curriculum will also develop students personally and socially. Students will work as individuals, in groups and in teams, developing concepts of fairness, respect and personal and social responsibility. Students will have a number of opportunities to take on different roles and responsibilities, including leadership, coaching and officiating. Through the range of experiences that the curriculum offers, students will progress to be highly successful and effective in competitive, creative and challenging situations. The curriculum also aims to develop the confidence and interest of the students, encouraging them to get involved in exercise and sport outside of school.

Assessment: Physical Education
Students will be assessed at the end and throughout each activity block according to the whole school KS3 assessment policy. The students’ progress and achievement will be marked according to the following:

- developing skills in physical activity
- making and applying decisions
- developing physical and mental capacity
- evaluating and improving

The students' marks are levelled and recorded on an individual student profile sheet. The mark for each activity tracks student progress throughout the year. Further to this students will also partake in a range of self assessment and peer assessment activities during lessons, such as observation and evaluation of gymnastic sequences and sporting techniques.

Progression: Physical Education
In order to achieve the highest level in Year 8 students should be able to select and combine skills, techniques and ideas and apply them accurately and appropriately with consistent precision, control and fluency. Students should be able to draw on their knowledge of strategy, tactics and composition when performing in different situations. They should be able to analyse, modify and refine skills to improve their own and others’ performances. Students should be able to plan, organise and safely lead practices and they should develop a good understanding of how exercise contributes to health and fitness.

Homework: Physical Education
Students will be expected to complete homework tasks throughout the year. These will be based on the theoretical topics in Physical Education and may include exam style questions, levelled questions, exploration tasks and analysis of performance.

Websites: Physical Education
The following websites are useful links for parents and carers looking for a community club in a wide range of sports and for encouraging a healthy active lifestyle:

http://www.kentsport.org/com_sport_fys_home.asp
http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/sports-and-leisure/sports-clubs-and-activities
http://www.nhs.uk/change4life/Pages/change-for-life.aspx

How parents and carers can help: Physical Education
Parents and carers can help by encouraging their daughters to attend at least one extra-curricular sports club per week. Students can enhance their physical abilities and develop their social, personal and mental skills through taking part in our high quality out of hours learning programmes. Extra-curricular clubs are open to
all students of all abilities and the programme offered caters for a wide variety of interests and tastes. Parents and carers can also help by supporting their daughter in any community activities or clubs that are on offer. The extra-curricular clubs run during lunch time and after school and include the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Winter activities</th>
<th>Summer activities</th>
<th>Activities offered all year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September to March</td>
<td>April to July</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Athletics</td>
<td>Hockey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football</td>
<td>Rounders</td>
<td>Netball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness</td>
<td>Cricket</td>
<td>Indoor Rowing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benchball</td>
<td></td>
<td>Badminton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Zumba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MGGS has a number of competitive fixtures against schools both in and out of the district throughout the year and parents/carers can assist the Physical Education department by encouraging their daughters to take part in these events. Details about such fixtures will be communicated to students on a weekly basis. If parents or carers would like to assist the Physical Education department with coaching/officiating then please contact the Head of Department, Mrs Robbins.

**Religious Studies**

**Course outline: Religious Studies**

In Year 8 students study the following units of work in this subject:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term 1 and Term 2</th>
<th>Topic focus</th>
<th>‘Big Question’ around topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suffering</td>
<td>Why is there suffering? Are there any good solutions?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3 and Term 4</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>What commitments are associated with belonging to a religious community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 5 and Term 6</td>
<td>Life and Death</td>
<td>What significance does death hold for religious believers?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tasks and activities are challenging and have been designed both to stimulate students’ interest and involvement in the study of religion and to make important religious concepts explicit through explanation and modelling. Lessons are structured with an introduction, exposition and plenary. We have aimed to create some schemes of work that are discrete to one religion, with others addressing many faiths.

**Assessment: Religious Studies**

Students will experience a variety of assessment strategies in year 8. We aim to provide opportunities to students with various skills and interests. The common themes across all assessment in RS are that students will be assessed according to their ability to explain, provide evidence, compare, evaluate and express a personal view. We will award grades according to school guidance in the A, B, C, D format. The students will have an end of year test which will begin to introduce the style of their future GCSE examination. This will be a challenge but we have adjusted the expectations appropriately and are confident in the overall benefits this will bring the girls.

**Progression: Religious Studies**

Progress in this subject is dependent upon students’ ability to revise factual content, advocate reasoning and extend their evaluation. Through year 8 and beyond we want the students to practise producing well reasoned, articulate and controlled responses to open or provocative questions.
**Homework: Religious Studies**
Homework tasks can be very varied. They may involve: revising in preparation for a test; reinforcing work covered in class; completing a task started in class; carrying out project/investigation work; carrying out preparatory work for a forthcoming task or lesson-activity and conducting questionnaires/surveys. Homework may also include revision for a core assessment.

**Websites: Religious Studies**
There are a plethora of websites on world religions that can easily be found via a search engine. Other very useful sites for research and investigation at this level are:
www.re-xs.ucsm.ac.uk
www.bbc.co.uk/religion

**How parents and carers can help: Religious Studies**
Religious Studies is the only subject that addresses a certain kind of question. These are the questions that come naturally to us all and the attempted answers have drastically shaped the world we live in. We are motivated to provide outstanding education in this area as we want students to have increased awareness and literacy when tackling the most challenging religious, philosophical and moral questions. It has never been more important to develop one's own knowledge of the beliefs of others and their reasoning. Further, we will equip our students with the right skillset to argue, debate and discuss with greater potency and self-awareness.

**Science**

**Course outline: Year 8 Science**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Topic focus</th>
<th>‘Big Question’ around topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term 1</td>
<td>Matter</td>
<td>How different are the substances that exist around us?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Organisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>How is energy transferred in the world around us?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3</td>
<td>Waves</td>
<td>What sort of waves are used for a “Wi-Fi” connection?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 4</td>
<td>Reactions</td>
<td>What sort of reaction is an explosion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Genes</td>
<td>Should genetic modification be allowed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 5</td>
<td>Forces</td>
<td>Can we use forces to control the physical world around us?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Electromagnets</td>
<td>From the lights in your home to your earbuds-how do they work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 6</td>
<td>Earth</td>
<td>Are we responsible citizens on planet Earth?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ecosystems</td>
<td>How do organisms get energy for their survival?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students will also cover aspects of ‘How Science Works’ which includes explanations, argumentation & decisions, and practical & enquiry skills. Through the study of Science students can become independent enquirers by identifying questions to answer and problems to solve. Creative thinking is an important part of the scientific process. Scientific ideas are developed by approaches that use a combination of experimentation, evidence and creativity. Students studying Science carry out group practical and investigative activities. They learn to work confidently with others, decide on appropriate distribution of
tasks and take responsibility for their own contribution thus becoming effective team workers. Work in Science gives students the chance to organise themselves and show personal responsibility, initiative, creativity and enterprise with a commitment to learning and self-improvement. Students are encouraged to become effective participants; they learn to think practically and with logic, using rational arguments to influence and persuade, and reach workable solutions. The study of science provides opportunities for students to become reflective learners by developing their evaluation skills.

Enrichment activities and discussions are a large part of Science lessons throughout Year 8 and explore ‘How Science Works’ in more detail. The students are faced with a range of ‘Big Questions’ such as “Does Yakult really work? If fitness were a pill how cost effective would it be to the NHS?, How can we make sparks? Why does silver keep going black?” Students are encouraged to explore these ideas and create their own opinions about these wider issues.

Students will carry out a range of enrichment activities both within the curriculum topics and as standalone projects. Students in year 8 have the opportunity to visit Kew Gardens with the geography department. They visit the greenhouses to answer various “big” questions. Where does chocolate come from? How is a cactus adapted to arid conditions? Are bananas fruit? They can also walk through the treetops and look at life underground.

**Assessment: Science**
Students will take three written combined topic tests throughout the year, having completed shorter checkpoint quizzes at the end of each topic. The quizzes will be a multiple choice format. Students will also be assessed on their investigative and practical skills on a number of occasions. There will also be an end of year examination which will test students on all the topics they have learned throughout the year. All tests will be graded in line with the whole school KS3 assessment policy with tests graded from an A to a D grade. These tests will form the core assessments for Science, allowing both the students and their teachers to monitor progress. There will be opportunities for self and peer assessment during the marking of these assessment activities.

**Progression: Science**
In order to achieve this progression they would need to learn and understand the content of the topics covered. Also, students need to be able to use models to explain phenomena, understand the benefits and drawbacks of scientific developments, use keywords and terminology in both spoken and written communication, understand the risks involved in science, describe and record observations systematically, use tables, charts and graphs effectively, recognise trends and use primary and secondary data.

**Homework: Science**
Students will be expected to do regular homework tasks. These will include exam style questions, levelled questions from their text-book, literacy activities such as writing a poem, writing up investigations, revision tasks, revising for tests and mid-topic assessments. The homework tasks may be given a mark out of ten, whereas the exam style questions, levelled questions and mid-topic assessments will allow students and teachers to monitor what level they are working at and what they need to do to improve.

**Websites: Science**
http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks3bitesize/science/

This site allows students to revise the topics they have covered in Science lessons and test themselves on their learning. Students can also look ahead and see how the Key Stage 3 work links to the work they will be doing in year 10 and 11.
How parents and carers can help: Science

Students should be encouraged to follow scientific developments that are happening now. This could be done through the media (magazines such as Focus cover developments in Science; TV programmes such as Brainiac and Mythbusters can include some good science and the more technical programmes such as Horizon can stretch the more able) and visits (alternative technology centres and the Science museum, for example). Visits to museums can encourage students to think about how Science has developed over time and how Scientists have collaborated in their research. Students will be provided with internet access to a textbook written specifically for this course. Parents and carers are advised to familiarise themselves with the content of this book so that they are more able to give help. Students should be encouraged to read scientific literature such as the Ask Uncle Albert and Smelly Science books. A CGP science revision guide that follows the new KS3 curriculum will be available for purchase in term 1. A letter will be sent home about this through parentmail.