

2025-26



TRENT  
COLLEGE

# Year 7-9 Curriculum Guide



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# Welcome

Starting life at secondary school is a major milestone in a young person's life. Often one of the main differences between junior school and secondary school is the transition to lessons being taught by subject specialist teachers located in separate departmental areas around the school campus.

We want our Year 7-9 pupils to enjoy and engage in our curriculum because, besides all the fun, friendship and enrichment activities on offer, our principal objective is, of course, academic learning. With this in mind, we aim to provide a supportive and nurturing environment where all our pupils are able to flourish and fulfil their potential.

Academic staff at Trent College care deeply about teaching and learning and strive to give engaging lessons that will enable pupils to achieve to the best of their ability. This booklet provides an overview of our academic approach within years 7-9, alongside an insight into each subject offered.

At the beginning of this academic journey, pupils experience a broad range of subjects that build on previous experiences, spark curiosity and most importantly promote a passion for learning that lays foundations for future academic endeavours further up the school. The core curriculum subjects include Maths, English and the Sciences, together with a selected language choice.

There is also a portfolio of creative and humanities subjects, which are initially compulsory but will become optional as pupils move up the school and shape their own academic journey. These include Art, Computer Science, Design & Technology, Drama, Food & Nutrition, Geography, History, Music, Physical Education, Psychology and Religious Studies.

I hope you find this booklet useful and please do contact the school should you have any questions relating to the curriculum.

**Mr D Brumby**

**Head of Lower School**

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# Academic Structure

**All pupils follow a two week timetable which has a spread of subjects throughout the week. From year 9 pupils have three 60 minute periods of lessons on a Saturday morning.**

**Pupils will be set for Maths from Year 7, and for English usually from Year 9. The timetable will be provided at the beginning of Michaelmas term and this is typically fixed for the whole year.**

## Prep (Homework)

Pupils are expected to undertake prep in out-of-class time. There is the option for pupils to join supervised prep sessions at school between 16.15 and 17.30, Monday to Friday.

Prep is regarded as a vital part of a pupil's education and it must always be the aim to produce high quality work. Each pupil is provided with a diary in which to record preps as they are set and prep is published online. Parents are encouraged to check that their child is being set prep regularly and is doing the appropriate amount of work.

## Learning Support

At Trent College we recognise that students learn at different rates and have different individual needs. It is important to us that all students are provided with the opportunity to work to the best of their ability at KS3.

Conversations between parents and Learning Support often start before a student arrives at Trent College. Information is gathered in order to gain an understanding of how an individual learns, communicates and responds to interactions so that we are able to identify any difficulty and implement appropriate action. All students are screened within the first term of Year 7 to obtain a clear understanding of every student's learning. Individual student profiles are shared with staff to help manage, support and develop identified areas of difficulty and enable the student to access the curriculum more effectively. Quality first teaching is of paramount importance to us as is pastoral and academic staff working together to offer personalised support.

1:1 Learning Support lessons are available to those students who would benefit from a planned programme of support and intervention to meet their individual needs. Students may work on developing working memory strategies, word reading fluency and accuracy, reading comprehension, intelligent spelling strategies, writing composition, mathematics skills and on gaining an understanding of study skills and revision techniques. Small group literacy lessons, reading buddies and touch typing sessions are timetabled for identified students.

Small group and 1:1 EAL lessons are available to help our students who have English as an Additional Language access the school curriculum by increasing their confidence and competence in English through reading, writing, speaking and listening activities. Students study to B1 and B2 Levels on the Common European Framework.

Learning Support provides information to parents and liaises with outside agencies regarding diagnoses and support. Students, parents and the school work together to enable individual success.

## Reporting System

Reports, along with parent-teacher and parent-tutor consultation evenings, are the main way in which Trent informs parents of the progress and attitude of their children. Perhaps most significantly, they allow teachers to suggest how pupils can improve their performance. A timetable of reporting schedules is available on the Parent Portal, and more details are provided in the Handbook, but the following provides an overview of our approach.

Parents will receive interim reports, a short report and /or a long report. These contain attainment grades and teacher comments.





## Personal, Social & Health Education

The 'Personal, Social & Health Education' programme at Trent College has been developed in accordance with the principles of Positive Education with a commitment to enabling our pupils to flourish. The PSHE programme is unique to Trent College and as a result we believe our programme is one of the best offered in any school in the country. The programme reflects our reputation for strong pastoral care and is made up of age-appropriate lessons which are specifically designed to meet the emerging needs of students.

We assess and understand these needs through our internal student voice process and in collaboration with our team of welfare professionals. The programme is very flexible and is quick to react to local and national issues as they arise. Unlike in many schools, tutors personally deliver the PSHE programme to their tutees. This enables tutors to gain a real depth of understanding of their tutees in matters that extend much further than the academic sphere. Professionals such as the school nurse, counsellor and safeguarding lead are also important contributors to the programme which also includes a range of external speakers. Informative talks to parents make up a further essential component. We endeavour to ask our students 'What is right with you?' and focus not just on what can go wrong, although this is explored.

The PSHE sessions have an academic feel with key objectives and learning challenges, as well as informative and fun tasks to challenge and engage. It is our mission to give our students the tools they need to thrive. Our programme is joined up, holistic and rooted firmly in contemporary issues suited to a rapidly changing world.

Our programme reflects the latest national and local guidance for schools, and we have developed it to promote values, understanding and acceptance in every area. Equality, inclusion and diversity are fully considered, and we commit significant time to ensuring that the pupils receive a first-class education in relation to Relationships, Health and Sex Education.

Online Safety is an important consideration for all schools and parents. We offer a free subscription to the National Online Safety App for all our parents, which has proved to be of great value in providing an insight into the risks and rewards of the online world that children explore with such enthusiasm.

**In our most recent school inspection, the report included the following findings:**

Pupils' natural tolerance, understanding and sensitivity towards those from different cultural backgrounds, and for the diverse individual needs or characteristics of other pupils, is a strength of the college and supports the rapid personal development that takes place.

Pupils have outstanding levels of tolerance and understanding for those from other faiths or cultural backgrounds and are committed participants in a range of activities to promote equality, diversity and inclusion including a willingness to sign a pledge to uphold the belief that 'We All Belong'.

Pupils have developed a strong commitment to equality within society promoted by leaders and governors through pastoral programmes that were revised to strengthen this ethos well before the current international focus on racial and gender issues.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual (LGBT) groups and pupils that are affirming their gender identity, feel free to go about their daily business in an atmosphere of equality and normality supported by the well-embedded relationships and sex education (RSE) programme that challenges all gender stereotypes.



# ART

Head of Department:	Mrs K O’Hare
GCSE option	Yes, optional
A level option	Yes, plus A Level in Photography

## Year 7 | Subject Overview Compulsory

Pupils are introduced to the visual elements that form the foundation of all artwork. Two projects are delivered throughout the year, with visual elements taught in a structured way to help pupils develop their subject-specific vocabulary and understand the ‘building blocks’ of art.

Pupils also take part in two Art History sessions, learning about the reasons behind artistic styles and how art has evolved across cultures and history.

Each project teaches pupils good practice in creating meaningful artwork, following the department’s ‘Process of Working’. This includes observational drawing, researching artists, experimenting with different media and materials, creating developmental pieces, and culminating in a final outcome that ties all elements together. Themes vary each year, with past examples including ‘Natural World’, ‘Insects’, and ‘Belongings’.

### Example lesson activities

- How to draw and make your drawings look 3D.
- How to use paint and further media such as mono prints, inks, collage, wax resist etc.
- How to create a design, invert it on the photocopier and create a scraper board image from it, using a scribe.

## Year 8 | Subject Overview Compulsory

Pupils build on their Year 7 learning, expanding their understanding of visual elements in new contexts. Two projects, each with an Art History session, are completed throughout the year. These projects differ from Year 7 but still follow the department’s ‘Process of Working’, reinforcing the stages of a meaningful art project.

Pupils develop their practical skills in drawing, painting, and other media, such as dark room techniques, mixed media, pastels, and card relief. Previous themes have included ‘Graffiti’, ‘Seashore’, and ‘Landscape’.

### Example lesson activities

- How to use further media such as wire, Posca Pens, watercolour, acrylic.
- How to create a tube out of paper to blow ink across your paper to create expressive effects.
- Create a wooden pizza with slices representing the visual elements. Decorate the pizza box.

## Year 9 | Subject Overview Optional

Pupils are now ready to work on a larger scale, creating more ambitious and personal pieces. Drawing and painting are revisited through two major projects, each including Art History sessions. Pupils will also learn to create and develop photograms using darkroom chemicals. Additional media, such as 3D card relief, printing, and oil pastels, are explored. Previous themes have included ‘All About Me’, ‘Fantastic and Strange’, ‘Identity’, and ‘Architecture’.

### Example lesson activities

- How to make a large 3D mask.
- How to work on a larger scale such as A2.
- How to make a photogram and develop it in the dark room.

### Year 7 to 9 Additional Opportunities

The Art department is open every lunchtime and after school for pupils to work on their artwork.

# BIOLOGY

Head of Department:	Mrs Caroline Forster
GCSE option	Yes, compulsory
A level option	Yes

## Year 7 | Subject Overview Compulsory

Introducing Biology to students we first study the basic building blocks of life by exploring animal cells (including our own) and plant cells. We regularly use microscopes to examine different types of cells and produce scientific drawings from them. We then discover how our skeleton, muscles and joints work together to protect, support and enable us to move and this where we are introduced to dissection by looking at a chicken wing, which is similar to our own! Finally, we study human and plant reproduction from a scientific perspective highlighting the interesting similarities between them and help to quash common myths.

Throughout the year students carry out many practicals, enabling them to apply their knowledge to new and exciting experiments.

### Example lesson activities

- Making a model of an animal cell
- Examining your own cheek cells with a microscope
- Using your arm span to predict your height

## Year 8 | Subject Overview Compulsory

Pupils cover a number of topics and continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of fundamental processes involved in Biology. Starting with Plant Reproduction, pupils explore important concepts including a flower dissection. Next as part of the ‘Breathing and Respiration’ topic pupils explore these vital processes physiologically but also in the production of food as fermentation. We look at ecosystems including pond dipping in our very own pond or investigating seed dispersal using the high ropes platform. The emphasis continues to be focussed on practical work where possible and relating ideas to pupils’ own experiences.

### Example lesson activities

- Lung dissection demo
- Flower dissections
- Fermentation of food products such as yoghurt and bread.

## Year 9 | Subject Overview Compulsory

In Year 9 pupils begin their AQA GCSE Biology course by focussing in greater depth on Cell Structure, Cell Specialisation, Cell Division and organisation. We continue to engage with practical work wherever possible, including several AQA Required Practicals. For example, Culturing Microbes, Investigating the effect of pH on Enzyme Activity and Investigating Osmosis.

Increasing importance is placed on good exam technique in order to thoroughly prepare our pupils for the GCSE exams.

### Example lesson activities

- Extracting DNA from kiwi fruits
- Determining how much catalase is in different food items by recording the height of foam produced.
- Creating a model to demonstrate human digestion.

### Years 7 to 9 Additional Opportunities

The department runs a number of ‘hands-on’ societies such as ‘Biology Club’ which is aimed at pupils in Year 7 and Year 8. There are many activities to enjoy through-out Biology Week and Science Week, with hands on activities and guest speakers. Pupils in Year 9 and Year 10 are eligible to enter the annual national ‘Biology Challenge’ competition.



# CHEMISTRY

Head of Department:	Dr C Wakerley
GCSE option	Yes, compulsory
A level option	Yes

## Year 7 | Subject Overview **Compulsory**

Chemistry is introduced via hands-on learning with practical investigations that link theory to real-world applications. Students are encouraged to collaborate, discuss, and build confidence in applying scientific concepts. Practical activities include use of the Bunsen burner and other laboratory equipment. Topics covered are states of matter, basic chemical reactions, acids and alkalis. We want the pupils to enjoy discovering new concepts and become confident in handling apparatus.

### Example lesson activities

- Using a Bunsen burner to heat a variety of chemicals.
- Making rainbow tubes with indicators.

## Year 8 | Subject Overview **Compulsory**

Chemistry continues to be taught via practical activities. The curriculum is designed to deepen students understanding of the natural world and the principles that govern it, while fostering critical thinking and practical skills. The idea of atoms and compounds is introduced along with displacement reactions of metals and how to purify substances. Topics covered are the Periodic Table, Separating techniques, metals and other materials, Earth. We want the pupils to gain understanding of key terms and be able to apply this to practical tasks.

### Example lesson activities

- Exploring the reactions of metals with acids.
- Distilling their own sample of water from ink.

## Year 9 | Subject Overview **Compulsory**

Students begin the AQA GCSE course and concepts are developed using a variety of practical and theoretical tasks. Concepts are discussed in more depth with analytical skills being further developed. Topics include Atomic Structure, The Periodic Table, Structure and Bonding and Chemical Calculations. We want the pupils to have a thorough background knowledge of key terms and concepts.

### Example lesson activities

- Electrical conductivity of substances.
- Making metal crystals.

## Year 7 to 9 Additional Opportunities

- Undertaking CREST award
- Competitions including Year 7 STEM spelling Bee.





# COMPUTER SCIENCE

Head of Department:	Mr S Reynolds
GCSE option	Yes, compulsory
A level option	Yes

## Year 7 | Subject Overview Compulsory

The aim during Phase 1 is to enthuse, to inspire, to introduce the fundamental concept of a computer and to teach basic computational thinking and coding skills. We look inside the computer and give an orientation of the parts inside. We introduce pupils to the use of mobile devices and the coding of apps. In addition to this academic Computer Science work, we have a (whole-school) duty to ensure that Trent pupils are equipped with a solid awareness of e-safety and that basic ICT skills are in place for other subjects. We use group work and practical tasks to ensure that pupils are able to communicate verbally with a computer presentation, produce word-processed written work of a good standard and conduct internet-based research.

### Example lesson activities

- Taking a computer apart and looking at the pieces inside.
- Learning to code mobile apps on our tablets.
- Understanding binary codes.
- Practical computer research, group presentation and communication.

## Year 8 | Subject Overview Compulsory

This phase is largely expanding on the insight given last year. Pupils will increase their app coding skills in a flexible course and extend their ideas to robotics. The course then moves to higher order theory concepts, building on the foundation given last year by introducing concepts such as encryption and cyber security. The year culminates in an introduction to written programming through the Python language.

### Example lesson activities

- Further stripping down of computer components and a look at the Trent College network infrastructure.
- Learning how to keep safe in a world of cyber attacks.
- Coding apps to control robots.
- Learning how we keep information safe through encryption.

## Year 9 | Subject Overview Compulsory

Phase 3 will involve more advanced concepts, deeper thinking and more challenging/mathematical coding problems through the Python language.

### Example lesson activities

- Full course in Python coding.
- Pygame or HTML web development lessons
- Discussion and case studies on cybercrime/ethics issues.

### Year 7 to 9 Additional Opportunities

Pupils will have the chance to participate in Computer Science trips and challenges (cyberfirst competition). There are also opportunities to attend talks by visiting expert speakers (normally one dedicated Computer Science-based talk per year). Pupils will have the opportunity to participate in ‘coding club’, where they will have the chance to learn more about programming and robotics. Encouragement to attend external courses such as those run by the Smallpiece Trust.

# DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

Head of Department:	Mr J Prince
GCSE option	Yes, optional
A level option	Yes

## Year 7 | Subject Overview Compulsory

Year 7 starts with a Workshop Safety Course/Construction Safety Award. Pupils will then complete multiple projects aimed at covering specific course elements.

1. Wooden Toy Car Project: the design process, woods as a material, basic hand tools, drilling machines, sketching skills, CAD drawing, finishing woods, testing and evaluating.

### Example lesson activities

- Evaluating modern car design for design inspiration.
- The basic skills of marking, planing, cutting and drilling timber.

## Year 8 | Subject Overview Compulsory

At the beginning of Year 8 we do the Machine Safety Course/Construction Safety Award, followed by several projects.

1. Copper Dish Project: metals as a material, marking out, cutting, filing, annealing, pickling, hollowing, planishing, drilling and polishing metals to produce a copper dish. Cutting, shaping and finishing man-made boards using machinery to produce a base for the dish.

### Example lesson activities

- How to mark, cut, anneal and shape copper from flat sheet into a dish.
- The basics of Computer Aided Design drawing in 2D.

## Year 9 | Subject Overview Optional

In Year 9 pupils so the Risk Assessment Safety Course/Construction of Safety Award. The projects are:

1. Art deco inspired vacuum-formed Clock Project: plastics theory, designing with electronic portfolios, the vacuum forming process, gerbil trimming, CAD CAM production, rendering.
2. Design and Development of a Pneumatic Rocket car

### Example lesson activities

- Vacuum forming 3D forms in plastic.
- 3D modelling of clock designs using Google SketchUp

### Year 7 to 9 Additional Opportunities

Pupils currently have the chance to attend regular gifted and talented days with Nottingham University Robotics courses, the Go4set eco-challenge and the Big Bang celebration day.



# DRAMA

Head of Department:	Mrs D Ward
GCSE option	Yes, optional
A level option	Yes

## Year 7 | Subject Overview Compulsory

Drama in Year 7 aims to introduce the principle of the ‘ensemble’ and the study of how drama is made by working together effectively with trust and respect within a safe and immersive learning environment. To begin with pupils are introduced to the ethos of ‘collaboration’ and are taught to use key explorative strategies and drama terminology. Our active and inclusive way of working is developed further during the rest of Term 1 and into Term 2 through the study of topics chosen from: ‘Darkwood Manor’, ‘Oliver Twist’ and ‘Harry Potter’. The year culminates in the study of Greek Theatre where pupils are encouraged to explore the style of this fascinating classical theatre form.

### Example lesson activities

- Use ‘Bodies as Objects’ in drama pieces.
- Watch musical theatre scenes to reflect on how characters and relationships develop.
- Collaborate together to create an ensemble performance of a short scripted extract.

## Year 8 | Subject Overview Compulsory

Pupils explore further how to collaborate effectively using drama, and its specialist terminology, to explore and reflect the wider world through the consideration of texts, topics and genres. To begin we tackle collaborative skills and interpret extracts from a variety of scripts. Next how drama is created via topics chosen from a range including: ‘Commedia Dell’Arte’ ‘Masked Theatre’ and ‘Romeo and Juliet’. Pupils also explore the skills of slapstick and physical theatre. During this key year where pupils decide whether to continue their study of Drama they will be encouraged to devise their own drama pieces using provocative stimulus including imagery, themes, text, poetry and music.

### Example lesson activities

- Create non-verbal scenes.
- Perform a polished scene as a character.
- Use set, props, costumes, and sound to enhance scripted and devised work.

## Year 9 | Subject Overview Optional

Pupils are encouraged to support each other in order to foster an inclusive and secure learning environment. They work practically and evaluate in writing a variety of challenging topics. Pupils explore themes, play texts and characters and also will begin to consider how Drama Mediums are used to communicate with and impact on an audience. To begin with pupils will refine their collaboration skills via the performance of scripted pieces and will explore the dynamic topic ‘Warden X’. Pupils will then tackle Non-Naturalistic Theatre using a variety of stimulating texts. Next comes Improvisation and Comedy before tackling the art of writing GCSE exam style responses based on the acting of key scenes from a drama text. Pupils will also create their own theatre pieces using the influence of a key practitioner, theatre style or real life event.

### Example lesson activities

- Work in character with the teacher ‘in role.’
- Watch and create stimulating non-naturalistic drama scenes.
- Analyse key scenes from a chosen text and answer GCSE style reports.

### Year 7 to 9 Additional Opportunities

Co-Curricular Drama at Trent is a thriving hub of creativity. We offer a range of productions each year including performing, technical and back stage roles. The Drama department offer workshops from staff and outside practitioners and a range of theatre trips each year. Lower School students also have the opportunity to perform in their own dedicated junior performance.

# ENGLISH

Head of Department:	Mr J Beal
GCSE option	Yes, compulsory
A level option	Yes

## Year 7 | Subject Overview Compulsory

In Year 7 pupils begin a thematic study of English, exploring the Hero’s Journey, Magical Worlds, as well as ending the year studying literature and non-fiction that looks at the power of culture both in and outside of the UK. They study Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone, examining how a hero grows throughout a story, this is followed by Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream to explore how ‘magic’ is presented and brought to life in the written word. At the end of the year, Year 7 begin exploring poetry about culture and personal experiences then analysing and discussing travel writing.

### Example lesson activities

- Pupils will explore layers of meaning in the texts they study, supported by their teacher to think about why a writer makes certain choices
- Pupils will use the 5 sense to bring Fairy Forest to life in their creative writing.

## Year 8 | Subject Overview Compulsory

In Year 8 pupils build on their thematic study of literature, moving on to explore The Gothic, ‘Stories of Struggle and Survival’, and then to the lighter theme of ‘Comedy.’ They also will look into the world of journalistic writing and news reporting.

They look at a multiplicity of text types from Shakespearean plays (Twelfth Night), Hill’s The Woman in Black, to modern texts like Fraillon’s The Bone Sparrow alongside newspaper and media reports. Pupils continue to build their skills of analysis and writing creatively throughout the year.

### Example lesson activities

- Pupils create their own news reports at the end of the year, becoming ‘reporters’ themselves.
- Pupils take an agenda based approach to studying their class novel, asking and answering questions to support their critical literacy skills.

## Year 9 | Subject Overview Compulsory

In Year 9 pupils begin to look across texts, beginning with Malorie Blackman’s Noughts and Crosses play and comparing it to Romeo and Juliet on the presentation of ‘Forbidden Love’ with the added challenge of exploring the genre of Tragedy. Students then move on to explore the dystopian genre, exploring a variety of popular and classic texts from Orwell’s 1984 to Collins’ Hunger Games trilogy. Pupils then focus on the challenging but provoking novel by Zusak, The Book Thief, exploring how narratives of war and language are used to shape meaning, providing a strong challenge and step up in preparation for GCSE study.

### Example lesson activities

- Pupils create their own dystopian film trailer using conventions of the genre.
- Pupils research the context of The Book Thief to help build their understanding of the key characters and their struggles in Germany of 1940-1945.



# FOOD & NUTRITION

Head of Department:	Ms J Rigley
GCSE option	Yes, optional
A level option	No

## Year 7 | Subject Overview Compulsory

Students learn about health, hygiene, food preparation, and storage. They study the Eatwell Guide to understand healthy eating and explore food origins, focusing on fruits, vegetables, fish, chicken, and eggs. Topics include food provenance (organic, free-range, and fair trade), sensory analysis, and tasting. Practical skills are developed through hands-on sessions, leading to independent assessments.

### Example lesson activities

- Practicals: Pasta and pasta sauce, Chicken Nuggets, Pizza, Fish Fingers, Kebabs, Flapjacks, Cookies, fruit scones.
- Knife skills (Batonnet, Macedoine, Julienne, Brunoise)
- Wake the Yeast Beast experiment
- Sensory analysis and tasting
- The Eatwell Guide

## Year 8 | Subject Overview Compulsory

Building on Year 7, students practice hygiene and food prep with a focus on multicultural dishes influenced by culture and religion. They study dietary proteins, including vegetarian and vegan options, and explore future food sources like lab-grown meat. Module 3 covers molecular gastronomy. Students are assessed through independent projects and must design a meal meeting School Food Standards.

### Example lesson activities

- Practicals: American Pancakes, Burritos, Spaghetti Bolognese, Turkey Burgers, Chicken Biryani, Pineapple Upside Down Cakes, Apple Crumble, Chilli Taco Baskets, Crispy Tuna Patties, Mini Muffin Omelettes.
- Enzymic Browning with apples
- Dextrinisation experiment with toast
- Future Food – Bush Tucker Trial
- Molecular Gastronomy – Balsamic Pearls

## Year 9 | Subject Overview Optional

Students continue to build on principles of nutrition and healthy eating, including energy, nutrients, water, fiber, and lifelong health. They develop competence in a broad range of cooking techniques: selecting and preparing ingredients independently, using advanced tools and equipment, applying various heating methods, and adjusting seasoning based on texture, taste, and smell, often adapting their own recipes. Students focus on allergies and intolerances and make a variety of festival dishes. The science of food is studied looking at coagulation, aeration, foam formation and steam. In preparation for Year 10 GCSE, students practice making lasagna from scratch and gain an understanding of gluten formation.

### Example lesson activities

- Practicals: Lamb Burgers, Chicken Stir Fry, Festival, Chocolate Flapjack, Vegetarian Fajitas, Swiss Roll, Jam Tarts, Profiteroles, Lasagne
- Festival food sampling
- Pasta dough practise – tagliatelle

### Year 7 to 9 Additional Opportunities

- We will run various competitions throughout the year for students to be able to practise their culinary skills at home.
- Students who cook or bake at home have the chance to earn extra merits.
- We run a baking club after school.
- There will be a ‘Star Baker’ and ‘Master Chef’ chosen from each practical lesson.



# GEOGRAPHY

Head of Department:	Mr D Hartley
GCSE option	Yes, optional
A level option	Yes

## Year 7 | Subject Overview Compulsory

Year 7 Geography is designed to give pupils a sense of what Geography is. To build upon pupils’ own experiences of the world and the technology they use in their lives to introduce the pupils to spaces and places that they are connected to around the world. We extend this into considering what these places were in the past, are like at present and could be like in future. Pupils will then start to develop ideas of exploring China the world’s largest country in terms of population, followed by a final unit exploring the climates of today and how climates differ across the globe. We finish the year introducing pupils to fieldwork through a microclimate study, they experience the investigation process of collecting data, analysing data, formulating conclusions and evaluating their fieldwork.

### Example lesson activities

- Microclimate fieldwork in the school grounds – measuring of wind speed & temperature.
- Classroom debate on the case for HS2.
- OS Map skills for finding grid references, symbols, relief.

## Year 8 | Subject Overview Compulsory

Pupils will tackle a number of topics starting with rivers, which will form the basis of the Year 8 field trip. We then move on to development and trade, with a focus on class debate and discussion including the inequalities in resources and development as well as the ethics of the global supply chain and the importance of Fairtrade. Returning to physical geography, the year culminates with a unit on fragile environments, investigating climate change and plastics in the ocean.

### Example lesson activities

- River study investigation – measuring river depth, velocity, width and sediment size/roundness.
- The trade game – teams of pupils work together as a country with resources they have to develop.
- Use of Gapminder to investigate differences in development.

## Year 9 | Subject Overview Compulsory

We start the GCSE specification in Year 9 with the intention that pupils will have detailed and precise knowledge and understanding of the course by the end. Pupils study the urban challenges of low income countries, with a focus on Lagos, Nigeria, an important world and mega city. We explore the challenges and opportunities of living there and how this may impact upon the people’s quality of life. In the Lent term we move onto tectonic hazards, discovering the terrible power of earth-shaping forces through the study of earthquakes and volcanoes. We finish the year studying ecosystems on a range of scales from local to global biomes, concentrating on rainforest characteristics and adaptations.

### Example lesson activities

- Pupils model the movement of plates – in ridge push and slip pull.
- Pupils create models of squatter settlement favela buildings.

### Year 7 to 9 Additional Opportunities

Trent runs a Geography Society which invites guest speakers into school. A team of pupils from Year 9 & 10 take part in the “Worldwise Quiz”, hosted at Trent, in which they test their knowledge against around 10 other schools. All pupils in Year 8 travel to the Peak District to undertake a day of Geography fieldwork. Once in Year 9, pupils can join the bi-annual Geography overseas trip.

# HISTORY

Head of Department:	Mr D Gervis
GCSE option	Yes, optional
A level option	Yes, plus A Level Politics

## Year 7 | Subject Overview Compulsory

The Year 7 course enables the first foray into British History with a wide ranging focus on issues relating from religion to pestilence and their impact on medieval and early-modern royal authority. This course provides pupils with key skills such as source analysis and essay structure to enable them to develop the ability to flourish as future historians.

### Example lesson activities

- This course is taught using Invasion, Plague and Murder, 1066-1588 by Aaron Wilkes.
- Pupils will engage in numerous role-play activities to bring the events of the Middle Ages to life. They will look at differing pieces of evidence and be introduced to the concept of judgi ng their relative value.

## Year 8 | Subject Overview Compulsory

In Year 8 pupils continue the academic rigour, starting with a study of Queen Elizabeth, with a particular focus on the Spanic Armada. The course then becomes more global, looking at slavery and creation of Empire. Pupils not only examine the events that happen, but also discuss the impact of these events on the modern day, and how history should be remembered.

### Example lesson activities

- This course is taught using Renaissance, Reformation and Revolution, 1509-1745 by Aaron Wilkes and other topic specialist resources.

## Year 9 | Subject Overview Compulsory

In Year 9, pupils focus on twentieth century history starting with a study of social British society including life in Britain and the Suffragettes. When studying the First World War, pupils learn about the causes of the conflict, as well as the contribution made by soldiers from across the Commonwealth. This is followed by the Second World War where students explore questions should as ‘How should Dunkirk be remembered?’ and how history should remember Sir Arthur Harris. Pupils then learn about the Holocaust and the Final Solution before looking at the decline and impact of the British Empire. The final topic is ‘Multicultural Britain’ looking at the contribution made by a variety of groups since migrating to the UK.

### Example lesson activities

- This course is taught using Technology, War and Independence, 1901-present day by Aaron Wilkes.
- It involves developing key literacy and thinking skills reflected in extended writing tasks, source evaluation, class presentations, group and individual project work.
- Lessons make good use of a range of online and archive resources, of music and documentaries, of film and current affairs to ensure the relevance of the topics is clear and that the pupils are inspired by these remarkable historical events.

### Year 7 to 9 Additional Opportunities

As well as the wide variety of learning experiences offered in class, the History Department values the ability of pupils to carry out independent project work which has seen some pupils produce first-class research. In recent years we have taken a wide variety of trips outside of the classroom including, a trip to the Imperial War Museum and a residential trip to the First World War Battlefields.



# MATHEMATICS

Head of Department:	Mrs C Howat
GCSE option	Yes, compulsory
A level option	Yes, with additional Further Maths

## Year 7 Subject Overview Compulsory

The first term of Year 7 is spent in mixed ability teaching groups before all pupils sit two common assessments. Teachers cover some basic numeracy ideas to establish a clearer understanding of what pupils have previously studied. From January, once pupils are set in their ability banded groups, they continue to build on their Key Stage 2 learning by focusing on the key curriculum areas of Number, Algebra, Ratio, Geometry and Statistics.

### Example lesson activities

- Receive logins for the Dr Frost website and learn how to complete online prep using this resource.
- Bingo games.
- Card sorting activities.
- Mathematical investigations.

## Year 8 Subject Overview Compulsory

During Year 8, the learning from Year 7 is further extended so all pupils meet topics that underpin further mathematical study such as Pythagoras' Theorem. Work on Percentages, Fractions, Decimals and Ratio is given more real life context and pupils meet concepts of scale drawing and loci. Key algebraic concepts such as simplifying expressions and equation solving are extended to a more complex level.

### Example lesson activities

- Discover how a pair of compasses can be used to accurately construct straight lines.
- Learn how algebra can be used in a more practical context to solve real life problems.
- Lessons on scatter graphs give opportunities for pupils to collect and investigate real life data.

## Year 9 Subject Overview Compulsory

In Year 9 pupils will meet concepts such as Trigonometry, Quadratics and Cumulative Frequency and extend their work on Percentages, Angles and Equation Solving even further. The development of problem solving skills becomes a key focus so that pupils can answer questions that use their mathematical understanding in a less familiar context or with less structure given.

### Example lesson activities

- Problem solving activities and challenges.
- Investigating real world data.

## Year 7 to 9 Additional Opportunities

All top set pupils are entered for the UK Mathematics Trust Mathematics Challenges. These are nationally recognised competitions where we see many pupils achieve Gold, Silver and Bronze certificates. Those who do well can qualify for follow on rounds.





# MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

(FRENCH/GERMAN/SPANISH)

Head of Department:	Mr C Kelly
GCSE option	Yes, optional
A level option	Yes

## Year 7 | Subject Overview Compulsory

In Year 7 the aim of the Modern Languages Department is to enthuse and motivate pupils to appreciate other languages and cultures by introducing them to basic language skills and ways of life in the countries where the language is spoken. By the end of the year, pupils should have a foundation in their chosen language, having developed skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing, with a strong grammar base.

### Example lesson activities

- Vocabulary and phonics games to improve pronunciation.
- Use of computers for interactive learning.
- All pupils are entered into the Foreign Language Spelling Bee competition.

## Year 8 | Subject Overview Compulsory

We build on the foundation of Year 7, with a focus on more complex themes and structures. Pupils will grow in confidence when dealing with longer passages of language, develop their comprehension skills and become more grammatically aware.

### Example lesson activities

- Use of websites to practise vocabulary and grammar (Linguascope, Languages Online, Quizlet Live, Seneca Learning).
- Cultural awareness lessons – Festivals in countries across the world.
- All pupils are entered into the Foreign Language Translation Bee competition.

## Year 9 | Subject Overview Compulsory (additional MFL optional)

The aim is to prepare pupils for the GCSE course, building on their language knowledge. During this year, the language encountered will be more sophisticated, and pupils should develop a grasp of the different time frames and tenses. In addition, there will be a strong emphasis on translation skills, and expressing and justifying personal opinions.

### Example lesson activities

- Dictation and translation Skills.
- Poetry and Literary Texts.
- Surveys, speed-dating, role-plays to practise speaking.

### Year 7 to 9 Additional Opportunities

Pupils in Lower School will have the opportunity to participate in a trip to France and Germany. Past trips have included visits to Strasbourg & the Black Forest, Paris, and Normandy. In Year 9 pupils may take part in the Main School trip to Spain. In addition, pupils choosing German have the option to participate in the German Exchange with Long Eaton’s twin town, Langen, near Frankfurt. In addition, Trent is involved in various Business Language Champions challenge events.

Past examples have been organising an international music festival, debating competitions, and a Japanese taster day. We also offer pupils the chance to enter competitions such as Language Perfect and the Spelling and Translation Bees, organised by Routes Into Languages. We are also fortunate to have native speakers as language assistants, who wherever possible will work with individuals or small groups to practise speaking.

# MUSIC

Head of Department:	Mr N Parrans-Smith
GCSE option	Yes, optional
A level option	Yes

## Year 7 | Subject Overview Compulsory

Music’s wide range of challenges and interdisciplinary approach means that Year 7 Music is, in effect, a foundation year for the study that lies ahead. Rhythm and pitch notation both feature, but the emphasis is on their practical application in composition, and they are subservient to the fundamental Elements of Music: core themes and ideas found universally in Music.

### Example lesson activities

- Ensemble composition and performance projects include a rhythmic ostinato task, descriptive graphic score task and a Three in One melodic ostinato task in which pupils are required to write using appropriate notation.
- Whole-class exploration of the elements of music, vocal technique when singing and the instrumental families.

## Year 8 | Subject Overview Compulsory

Heavily skewed towards practical work, Year 8 Music focuses on giving pupils the tools to compose and express themselves through their own music. Technical composition exercises build on melody-writing skills, and accompaniment styles are explored to add interest. A cross-disciplinary study of the origins of The Blues provides opportunities for improvisation and keyboard facility, as well as highlighting Music’s significant political role. A challenging composition task ends the year, composing music in binary, ternary and rondo form using Sibelius notation software.

### Example lesson activities

- Pupils explore melodic composition and harmony, composing and performing in pairs, an 8-bar melody, a piece in binary, ternary and rondo form, and a fanfare, to be written down using appropriate notation.
- Ensemble composition and performance projects include a study of Blues music, in which pupils learn to play the 12-bar Blues sequence, walking bass line, and then create improvisatory ‘licks’ using the Blues scale.

## Year 9 | Subject Overview Optional

As preparation for further musical study, Year 9 Music gives pupils an exploration of the philosophy of music, encompassing social, historical and cultural contexts, and the changing musical landscape over the last 400 years. Through practical performance, compositional experimentation, listening and group discussion, pupils embark on a musical journey through time and across the globe, discovering the musical traditions of Europe, Africa and India.

### Example lesson activities

- Pupils explore Concerto through the eyes of Baroque composers, composing and performing a solo section for a Concerto, to be written down using appropriate notation. A study looking at the integration of Music and Drama encompasses a composition project in which pupils compose a soundtrack for a film trailer using Sibelius notation software.
- Whole-class exploration of the changing musical landscape from the Baroque period through to the 21st Century, and across the globe through composition and performance projects encompassing European, African and Indian traditions.

### Year 7 to 9 Additional Opportunities

In addition to the extensive Co -curricular programme of ensembles and concerts that the Department runs, there are opportunities for concert trip attendance. The Department also gives guidance for pupils entering local and national competitions in essay writing, composition and performance, as well as supporting music-making in external organisations. Provision is also made for theory tuition if and when required/desired.



# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Head of Department:	Miss N Charsley (Girls), Mr R Mahony (Boys)
GCSE option	Games Programme
A level option	Games Programme

Year 7 | Subject Overview

Compulsory

Pupils are introduced to a broad spectrum of skills. The subject has an individual focus with an emphasis upon personal achievement. A ‘health’ theme runs throughout all aspects of the taught curriculum, along with social interaction. The skills and tactical ideas introduced complement the Sports programme and in particular the Performance Sports of the school. The importance of sportsmanship and fair play is also developed. Through reciprocal teaching, in areas like gymnastics and athletics, pupils are encouraged to reflect upon their work in order to develop greater understanding.

Example lesson activities

- Personal survival skills and techniques as well as stroke development.
- Movement, through travel, and body management skills, through balance extending into routines.
- Introduce touch rugby and develop core skills and understanding.
- Running, jumping and throwing in athletics.

Year 8 | Subject Overview

Compulsory

Pupils continue to build upon and develop the skills, techniques and tactical ideas introduced in Year 7. Game-related modules will begin to focus upon certain sports where more advanced skills and techniques can be developed. A ‘games for understanding’ approach allows pupils to become more tactically proficient. Running throughout the programmes of study is a theme of health and fitness. It is not specifically taught as an activity at this stage, but in each separate module of work the positive relation between exercise and health will be investigated and simple concepts of how to and why we should undertake exercise are investigated.

Example lesson activities

- Life-saving skills and techniques as well as swimming stroke development.
- ‘Core’ gymnastic skills within rotation and inversion.
- Continuous activity, heart rate, strength and flexibility concepts running through all activities.
- Learning how to pace your run and set achievable targets.

Year 9 | Subject Overview

Compulsory

The subject modules focus on more specific rules and regulations and the need for fair play and sportsmanship within specific game situations where competition is enhanced. The role of individuals in team situations is explored in relation to participants, but also as a coach, captain, leading a warm up and refereeing or umpiring.

Example lesson activities

- Gymnastics and Dance focus upon vaulting skills and routine construction.
- Specific concepts of fitness are more formally taught in the fitness suite - Cardio-Vascular fitness, strength and muscular endurance.
- Athletics explores specific events and offers personal challenge as well as peer competition.
- Leadership will focus on basic leadership skills and pupils will deliver a small session to a group of pupils from The Elms.

Year 7 to 9 Additional Opportunities

The Sport Programme runs through the week and pupils will receive two sessions; a dedicated PE lesson and an afternoon of Games each week. Sport-specific activities are also on offer throughout the week that are optional for pupils to attend as part of the co-curricular programme.



# PHYSICS

Head of Department:	Mr B Hayton
GCSE option	Yes, optional
A level option	Yes

## Year 7 | Subject Overview Compulsory

The Year 7 physics course focuses on developing the fundamentals of the subject and the practical experimental skills needed for the study of all sciences. The curriculum covers an introduction to forces, the behaviour of light, sound waves, energy, and space.

Example lesson activities

- A major part of this course is performing experiments, whether it's powering a light bulb with a lemon or observing sound waves. Practical work is at the heart of physics.

## Year 8 | Subject Overview Compulsory

Building on the knowledge gained in Year 7, the Year 8 course explores new areas of physics. The focus on discovery through practical work guides students through topics such as electricity, magnetism, energy transfers, motion, and pressure.

Example lesson activities

- The experiments in Year 8 further develop practical skills while incorporating mathematical data handling and problem-solving. Creating electromagnets and working with hydraulics add to the fun and engagement.

## Year 9 | Subject Overview Compulsory

In Year 9, students embark on an exciting journey into the world of physics, laying the foundation for their AQA GCSE course. The curriculum introduces key concepts such as energy transfers and energy resources. Pupils explore atomic structure, delving into the fascinating uses and potential dangers of radiation. Additionally, they investigate the kinetic theory of matter, gaining insight into density and understanding why different substances have distinct melting and boiling points.

Example lesson activities

- The mathematical aspects of physics become more prominent, and pupils begin to see that they can use theories and ideas not only to solve problems but also to predict outcomes. The historical aspects of physics are emphasised, highlighting the relevance of great scientists' imaginations in the evolution of physics.

### Year 7 to 9 Additional Opportunities

Physics should never just be limited to the classroom and we encourage students to watch scientific programmes and attend science open days and shows. Developing a passion for Physics through STEM activities and clubs will broaden students' horizons, help their understanding and will spark a life-long love of science.

# PSYCHOLOGY

Head of Department:	Mrs V Gandhi
GCSE option	Yes, optional
A level option	Yes

## Year 9 | Subject Overview Optional

This course aims to engage students in an interesting approach to the study of well-being and social responsibility. The first part of the course will be devoted to the theories of well-being, character strengths and identity. With this backdrop, we will then turn to the science of stress and consider how enhancing positive emotions, engagement with work and mindfulness impacts on the stress response. Next, we will study ethics of social living, in which we will explore social psychological experiments about obedience and de-individuation. We will discover that well-being and happiness are deeply intertwined with social connections and positive relationships.

Example lesson activities

- Analysing how character strengths can be used to achieve goals.
- Discovering about concepts such as mindfulness that may help with focus and enhancing well-being.
- Re-enacting experiments.
- Keeping a gratitude journal and examining whether this makes a difference to feelings of well-being.

### Year 7 to 9 Additional Opportunities

We plan to go to the Science versus Pseudoscience conference which features interactive presentations by university lecturers about the Psychology of Dance, Psychology of Magic and Hypnosis.

Most importantly, it is hoped that this course will allow students to get an understanding of their behaviour and the behaviour of those around them and use the concepts of positive psychology to enhance well-being.



# RS: PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS

Head of Department:	Mrs T Ford
GCSE option	Yes, optional
A level option	Yes

Year 7 | Subject Overview

Compulsory

Pupils will begin to contextualise issues within RS through engaging and relevant lessons. They will begin to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the six world religions. The foundations for examining RS are introduced through using sources of authority and debating the ethics of religious belief. Each new topic will begin with P4C (Philosophy for Children) where pupils will begin to learn how to create their own philosophical questions and work as a community to answer their questions.

Example lesson activities

- Guerrilla Prep - Pupils have 15 activities to choose from to reinforce and deepen their understanding of our topics in RS as well as build skills for independent learning.
- 'Windows to Your Soul' is an opportunity for pupils to create their own windows to their soul using multi-medium.

Year 8 | Subject Overview

Compulsory

Pupils use 'Philosophy for Children' to create their own philosophical questions about Islam, examining the challenges faced by Muslims through a close study of Islamic beliefs and practices. They explore diverse ideas and start connecting beliefs and practices across religions through an inquiry into death and the afterlife. During Lent, pupils study the role of Jesus in religion and history using multiple disciplines. The Trinity term introduces Judaism, allowing pupils to reflect on identity and the role of religion in Jewish life. Finally, pupils work in teams to determine which person of faith has made the greatest impact on the world through independent research.

Example lesson activities

- 60 Minute Mosque Makeover!
  - Reading Manga Messiah.
  - Fat Tuesday - Pupils explore this religious celebration in a mock New Orleans setting. The lesson is a fusion of foreign language, art and RS.
- CelebRE Big Brother - Pupils explore influential people of faith to compete against each other to find out who has done the most to change the world.
  - Dia de los Muertos - Pupils use found poetry and art to explore this religious festival.

Year 9 | Subject Overview

Optional

Pupils will evaluate major philosophical questions on war and love, using authoritative sources to support their views. They then explore topics like the sanctity of life and genetic engineering through debates and current events. During Lent, pupils deepen their understanding of Judaism by studying the Holocaust and its impact on Jewish individuals, communities, and global perspectives. They also examine diverse beliefs about the nature of evil, using creative approaches to address fundamental questions. In Trinity term, pupils investigate crime and punishment through current events and independent study, culminating in a research project on capital punishment and its portrayal in the media.

Example lesson activities

- Close analysis of religion and the media using film.
  - Pop Up Art Gallery examining the absence of existence.
- Using art to express meaning in a metaphorical approach to answering the question of why evil exists.

Year 7 to 9 Additional Opportunities

- Visit to the National Holocaust Centre.
  - RS Faith Trail.
- Interfaith Week.
  - Spirited Arts Competition.



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