



# **Charles Darwin School**

Aspire – Endeavour – Achieve

## **Years 7 & 8**

# **Curriculum Overview Booklet 2025/2026**

**A Guide for Parents/Carers and Pupils**

# Welcome

Dear Parents and Carers,

This booklet gives you a brief guide to the school curriculum for Years 7 & 8.

As a parent or carer, you have a very important role to play in helping your child learn. Some parents are afraid of doing the wrong thing. The most important things you can do are:

- Take an interest in what your child is learning at school and encourage them to tell you about it.
- Praise them when they have done well.
- Give them a quiet space to do their homework.

Here are a few other tips on helping your child, taken from “A parent’s guide to the secondary school curriculum - Learning Journey” published by the DfE. Do not feel you have to do all of them, but any you can do will support your child’s learning.

## **Should I help organise?**

At secondary school your child will need to learn an important skill: organising their time to hand in their work on the right day. Some children have great difficulty in organising their work and need support. Your aim should be to enable them to become independent and well organised. Doing the organising for them will not help them progress. Encourage them to make a timetable of their deadlines and keep it visible. Praise them when they meet deadlines. Try not to become anxious when you see that things are not being completed. If your child sees your anxiety, it is likely to be counter-productive. Stay calm, be supportive and accept that things may sometimes go wrong. It is better for a child’s learning if they take responsibility for their own mistakes and accept the consequences that follow at school. Every child is different. Some always organise themselves and complete their work carefully. If your child is like this, you are lucky. These children need little assistance from their parents; just allow them to develop their independence further without interference.

## **Check the timetable and diary!**

Your child’s year will have a routine for homework, set out in a timetable which changes each year. Make sure you have a copy for reference so that you can talk about their tasks. Perhaps stick a copy on the “fridge door”. Check the ‘Satchel One’ app. You will be given a parent password. It will detail the homework that has been set in school, expected time to be spent and deadline for submission. Check the Student Planner regularly (it should be signed once a week). You can also use the planner to tell a teacher if there are problems, etc.

## **How can you help if your child is not clear what they have to do for homework?**

- If you know the subject (and can explain it patiently) then take a look yourself.
- If you do not know the subject, you can offer to help by searching for relevant information in books or on the Internet.
- Another strategy to encourage your child is to ring a friend who may be able to help. A network of classmates can benefit them all.
- If none of these work, either you or your child should let the teacher know the difficulty.

## **Try teaching me!**

Revision for assessments and end of year exams has to be active to be productive. If your child just reads, they will not retain all the information. They need to work through past papers, test themselves and practise. This can be a very lonely and demoralising process. Be ready with support and encouragement. Offer to help by being a pupil. Explaining something to someone else is one of the best ways of consolidating learning: if your child can teach you, then they really know and understand.

## **Look ahead**

This guide tells you what is taught for each subject for the year. This will allow you to look for opportunities to support your child’s learning. This might involve something as simple as watching out for television programmes that feature a topic and getting your child to watch them.

## **Look back**

Keep your child’s old exercise books and look back over the work they have completed to help them see how they have improved over the last few years. Make sure they have a bag big enough to store exercise books and equipment.

**Create a routine**

Homework tasks are always more successful if they are built into the routine at home. If your child has a regular commitment after school, such as going to a youth club, going to a friend's house or playing sport they will need to organise their evenings and weekends to fit alongside their work. This is all part of learning how to manage their time and develop self-discipline.

**Access to a computer/internet**

It has proven essential over the last few years that pupils have access to a laptop or desktop computer as part of their equipment at home. To have access to Word and PowerPoint and to be able to log into TEAMS for remote learning has become a necessity. Working via a phone isn't easy for anyone, particularly when having to access worksheets etc. for homework on Satchel One.

**Keep it neat**

Students will always be encouraged by their teachers when their work is neat and tidy, and where they have tried hard to underline headings, put the date include whether it's a class work or homework. When you look through your child's work encourage them to do these things.

**Step by step**

Your child can learn from your thought processes. Next time your child asks you to help them with something, talk them through it step by step. Describe the steps you go through:

- How to plan the task.
- Why you are doing it a particular way.
- How you will be able to tell whether or not you have done it successfully.

It is particularly helpful when you point out your mistakes, and how you know they are mistakes.

**Keeping it together**

Schools do not always issue exercise books. Some subjects use a lot of A4 photocopies and handouts; pupils will use a ringbinder to keep them together. If so, they will need to be methodical making sure they file all the pieces of paper in a sensible order. Check any comments from teachers and help your child to make sure they have the right paper, folders and other equipment.

**Communication**

Make sure your contact details are always up to date. This is not just for emergencies, but also for the weekly newsletter 'The Link' emailed home every Friday. Call Parent text messages are also sent alongside phone calls and letters home. To keep up to date with all that is happening at the school, please make sure your child's contact detail and emergency contacts are up to date. Contact Student Services or Main reception with any updates.

# The Pastoral System

Each year group has an Achievement Co-ordinator and Pastoral Manager attached to it. Year 7 have a Transition Manager instead of a Pastoral Manager.

In 2025/2026 they are:

Year 7 Achievement Co-ordinator	Miss Monk
Year 7 Transition Manager	Mrs Quinn

**Achievement Co-ordinators** are teaching staff with responsibility for **academic monitoring and attendance** within the year groups to which they are attached. Their role is to work with students on all issues surrounding progress, attainment and pastoral care. They will oversee behaviour concerns in their year groups.

**Pastoral Managers** in Years 8/9 and 10/11 are responsible for support with **behaviour** and emotional issues, working closely with the Achievement Co-ordinators. They are non-teaching members of staff who will deal with day-to-day concerns using sanctions where appropriate. They will develop long-term strategies to help students adopt a positive approach to school and will be prominent around school.

The **Transition Manager** will support Year 7s' transition from junior school, and share responsibilities delegated by the Achievement Co-ordinator.

There will be a member of the **Senior Leadership Team** attached to each year cohort. His/her specific role is to support the Achievement Co-ordinator/Pastoral Manager/Transition Manager when necessary.

The School has a School **Counsellor**, Mrs King, who organises a team of volunteer counsellors and trains Peer Mentors. They work closely with Young Carers identified in school. You can request in-school counselling for your child or there is a drop-in provision before school and some lunchtimes. Please speak to the Achievement Co-ordinator or Pastoral Manager for further guidance if you have concerns about your child's mental health.

## Year 7

The transition from junior to secondary school can often be daunting unless managed efficiently. At Charles Darwin we spend a lot of time ensuring this “big step” is as smooth and stress free as possible for both pupils and parents.

Students will be placed in one of eight tutor groups and will mix with other students in their ‘half year group’ for their lessons.

Academically your child will be placed in different teaching groups depending on subject, ability and learning potential. With the exception of Maths, subjects are taught in carefully considered mixed ability groups

The ability based groups will be formally set after a number of assessments and tests during the first half term. Students will be closely monitored from the start and targets set to ensure progress is being made. There will be an opportunity throughout the year for movement between sets depending on assessment outcomes and progress.

During the first half term, parents are invited to meet their child’s form tutor to see how transition to secondary school is progressing.

The Year 7 main Parents’ Evening is held in the Summer term.

A diverse number of clubs are available to Key Stage 3. The Creative and Expressive Arts Faculties offer a number of subjects to students such as art, music and drama. Look for these on the school website.

The P.E. Faculty has achieved a number of awards for its role in achieving excellence in sport. With regard to Key Stage 3, the P.E. Faculty provides a huge range of extra-curricular activities such as netball, cricket, rugby, football, trampolining and athletics. Teams are entered in the Bromley and Kent Schools competitions.

Year 7 students have the opportunity to be elected onto the “Student Voice” council where relevant school development issues are discussed regularly. These students will be the liaison between the School Council and their form group, and lead in charity work and fund raising. Two members of Year 7 Student Voice will be elected onto the School Council.

### Year 7 Pastoral Team

Year 7 Achievement Co-ordinator, Miss Monk is supported by the Year 7 Transition Manager Mrs Quinn.

They oversee academic progress and pastoral care across the year group, and co-ordinate the transfer from primary to secondary school.

Both of these members of staff are also teaching members of staff. They are supported in their role by a team of form tutors who are also teaching members of staff.

### Year 7 Form Tutors

They are the first point of contact for parents and will deal with day to day issues, basic pastoral needs and ensure their tutees’ are contributing positively to the Year Group.

## Year 8

Academic success is a constant focus in Year 8 and all students are given every opportunity to achieve their full potential. Learning Development is carefully monitored at Charles Darwin. A report is prepared and then followed by a Parents' Evening which gives parents and carers the opportunity to discuss their child's progress.

Year 8 is an interesting year in that students are no longer the youngest members of the school community. In keeping with this view, students in Year 8 are called on to have a more active role within the school. This involves taking on the responsibility of Duty Pupil. This forms the basis of community service to the school and gives students in Year 8 an excellent opportunity to develop a sense of moral responsibility to their school community.

In keeping with the spiritual and moral ethos of Charles Darwin, Year 8 student representatives meet three times each term to discuss a variety of issues encapsulating the school, the local community of Biggin Hill and further afield. We call this body "Student Voice" as they have an impact on school development. This student body also has responsibility to review the school's Anti-Bullying policy.

On behalf of the year group, two Year 8 students also sit on the School Council Committee. This is a highly important role and is a great privilege for the Year 8 students elected.

In terms of the social ethos at Charles Darwin, Year 8 is given the opportunity to involve themselves in a variety of activities. There will be a number of inter-tutor competitions each term. These should provide healthy competition between each house and encourage students to take pride in their tutor group.

Overall, each Year 8 student is encouraged to avail themselves of every opportunity provided at Charles Darwin in order to reach their true potential.

### **Year 8 Achievement Co-ordinator**

Mrs Campbell

### **Year 8/9 Pastoral Manager**

tbc

### **Year 8 Form Tutors**

They are the first point of contact for parents and will deal with day to day issues, basic pastoral needs and ensure their tutees' are contributing positively to the Year Group.

## Attendance & Punctuality

Attendance and punctuality at Charles Darwin are generally very good. The school insists on high rates of attendance as part of its drive to promote high achievement. Our target for attendance is to be at or beyond national attendance figures.

Children who miss school regularly and have below acceptable levels of attendance find it very difficult to keep up with the pace of work expected and as a result often fall behind and make inadequate progress. In Years 10 and 11 absence can affect GCSE results and can often jeopardise examination entry if vital coursework is missed. A student whose attendance is 90% for each of the five years of school will miss the equivalent of half a school year. Our Educational Welfare Officer will contact families if absence levels are a concern. Penalty notices can be issued for poor attendance.

Consequently, students should only be absent from school for unavoidable reasons such as illness. Should a student be absent from school, parents should leave a message on the student absence line on every day of a student's absence. Students should also make every effort to catch up on classwork and homework which was set during their time away from school.

Government regulations require the school to categorise all absences as either authorised or unauthorised. The school must be satisfied that an absence is for a good reason before it can classify it as authorised. For reasons which the school believes to be trivial or where absences have not been fully explained, it will classify them as unauthorised.

Some parents choose to take their children on holiday during term time. This should be avoided. Where it is impossible to arrange a family holiday outside term time then an application form for leave of absence should be completed and returned to the school at least 15 days prior to the proposed holiday. **PLEASE NOTE THAT NO HOLIDAY LEAVE WILL BE AUTHORISED BY THE SCHOOL FOR ANY STUDENT DURING TERM TIME.** Special consideration for a period of absence from school in extenuating circumstances should be directed to the Headteacher, who is the only person who can authorise such requests. Penalty notices can be issued for holidays in term time.

Students who arrive after 8.30am on two occasions will receive a Whole School Detention. This will escalate to a Senior staff detention if lateness is repeated. In line with most other schools, students who arrive to school more than one hour after the start of the morning registration period are recorded as absent. If an acceptable written explanation is not received for arrival after 9.30am or later this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

If a student is absent from school, a truancy text will be sent to contact no.1 on the school's system. It will request that someone contact the school or leave a message on the student absence line, explaining the absence. A text message is also sent home to contact No.1 on the school's system to advise if their child was given a late mark for a.m. registration.

# Homework

Homework is an important part of learning and is set by teachers to support student progress. A wide variety of tasks will be set which encourage students to develop independent learning skills over the course of their time at school. Tasks will include learning information, key terms or spellings, completion of comprehension tasks, research in preparation for a new topic or to enhance understanding of work completed in class. In many cases, homework will be based on the learning completed in class but "interleaving" tasks will also be set where previous topics are revisited for homework to help students to improve their recall of prior topics.

Online learning programmes will be used in some subjects to help students work independently. These include Sparx for Maths, Tassomai and Seneca Learning for many different subjects and Linguascope for Modern Foreign Languages.

At Charles Darwin School homework is set on Satchel One, which is an APP that can be downloaded by students on a phone or tablet or can be accessed by searching Satchel One on a web browser. Parents can also download the APP and have parent access through a PIN which is given to parents at the start of year 7 or when their child joins the school. This makes it easy for parents/carers to support their children with their homework if needed. Up to 5 parent/carer accounts can be set up for each child so if at any time you wish to set up an additional account for example for another parent or grandparent, please contact your son/daughter's form tutor who will give you the PIN code. We recommend that all parents/carers create an account as this can be helpful if there are technical issues with your child's account.

On Satchel One, Homework tasks are explained by the teacher and resources are attached, for example worksheets, links to useful websites or links to other programmes. The set and due date are clear as well as the expected duration of the task.



The Satchel One APP

## Homework Support

Homework club runs every lunchtime for year 7 students in the first term in the computer room in VQ area with support from a member of staff and then for exam year groups for exam preparation.

The library is open to any student for homework support every lunchtime with computer access available as well as access to the books and other research resources and help from 2 members of staff if needed. The library is also open every day after school for homework support and computer access.

## Help and Sanctions

Students who have been unable to complete their homework for any reason or who have found it too difficult, should contact their teacher, either in person, by e-mail or via the message feature on Satchel One so they can provide support.

Students who do not complete their homework by the stated deadline will be given an extended opportunity to complete their work. If they miss the second deadline, a whole school detention will be set which will be written in their planner by the member of staff setting the detention.



# Learning Development

## Content

Data collected from primary schools at Bromley and Croydon transition events is combined with screening tests (CAT, Reading, Spelling & Mathematics) to determine a young person's strengths and areas of need.

Students entering Key Stage 3 with considerably weaker numeracy and literacy skills may struggle to meet the demands of the faster paced and more challenging content of the secondary curriculum. If transition or screening information suggests that a young person may benefit from additional input to boost their skills, parents of those pupils selected to receive intervention provision are informed individually.

A small number of students may be placed in a smaller provision class to support them with either their literacy or numeracy until they make sufficient progress to join standard sized classes.

## How You Can Help

- Help with personal organisation to ensure the correct equipment is brought to school each day.
- Help with organisation of time to complete homework by deadlines.
- Encourage a "can do" attitude to work and check through the work your child completes before they submit it.
- Help your child learn their times tables if they experience numeracy difficulties, and make this as visual an experience as possible.
- Listen to your child read for a few minutes every day.
- Spend 10 minutes every day on the SNIP reading and spelling programme if they experience literacy difficulties.

## SENCO:

Mrs L Thom

## Assistant SENCO:

Mr B Frost

## Grouping:

N/A

## Homework:

N/A

## Assessment:

- Year 7 CAT tests.
- Reading and Spelling tests.
- Maths Assessment.

# Art

## Content

In Art, students explore visual, tactile and other sensory experiences to communicate ideas and meanings. They work with a variety of materials and processes, developing confidence, competence, independence, imagination and creativity. Students will learn to appreciate and value the work of artists, designers and crafts people across times and cultures, and to understand the contexts in which they were made. Interwoven into all projects are opportunities to develop students' analytical and evaluative skills, learning to reflect critically on their own and other people's work, judging quality, value and meaning.

The yearly teaching programmes for Years 7, 8 and 9 are organised into a variety of projects of differing lengths. They each provide strong links to the key stage Art & Design National Curriculum and help build a strong foundation for those wishing to study Art or Textiles at GCSE level.

Year 7 - Formal Elements	
<b>Formal elements</b> This is taught through a series of introductory skills workshops.	<b>Ruth Piper</b> In this project students put into practice all the skills learnt earlier in the year to create a body of creative artwork inspired by the artist Ruth Piper.

Year 8 - Viewpoints		
<b>Ceramics</b> Students have the opportunity to work in clay creating an exciting 3D piece exploring artist and/or cultural differences.	<b>Protest Art</b> Informed by exploring their own views and opinions, beliefs about the world which surrounds them, pupils respond using art to share a viewpoint.	<b>Expressionism</b> Students explore emotions through the Expressionist Art movement to create a portrait based mixed-media outcome.

Year 9 - Great British Values		
<b>Greyson Perry</b> Students fully explore the theme of Great British Values. They discuss current topics of class and societal issues which informs their work creating a Greyson Perry style bank note based on a current icon.	<b>Peter Blake</b> Students study consumerism and the varied work of Peter Blake. Collage and mono printing culminate in creating a textiles waistcoat.	<b>Yinka Shonibare</b> Exploring our cultural heritage students learn a variety of print making techniques and create a repeat pattern printed outcome.

## Head of Creative Arts Faculty/Subject:

Mrs L. Broad

## Lesson Allocation:

2 lessons over a two week timetable.

## Homework:

Homework is set as mini briefs once every half term linking to the current project. This helps reinforce skills and knowledge learnt at school whilst allowing more independent learning.

## Assessment (including coursework):

Sketchbook, homework and practical outcome all provide opportunities for assessment against Art specific threshold descriptors.

## Curriculum Enhancement Trips & Clubs

- Key Stage 3 Art Club

## How You Can Help

- Encourage your child to experience wider art and design opportunities by taking them to visit art galleries.
- Have a range of art equipment, if possible, for use at home.
- Read through written work with your child.
- We ask for a £5 contribution to help towards the materials used which enables students to work with a wider variety of media and techniques and take their work home at the end of the year.

# Drama

## Content

In Year 7 students are introduced to the three different strands that make up the Drama curriculum; group work, performance skills and wider knowledge of theatre. Students are encouraged to work with sensitivity, creativity and demonstrate effective communication skills. Through the process of creating Drama, students are required to connect with the themes or issues being explored.

By the end of Year 7 students will have covered basic techniques and developed their creative and performance skills. They will be able to work with other people to create their own performance pieces.

Students will work in pairs, small groups, as a whole class and individually when creating practical work.

By the end of Year 8 drama skills are reinforced and students will learn more advanced techniques.

In Year 9, students are introduced to a wider range of texts and performance styles, as well as developing their understanding of production elements.

## Drama lessons at KS3 focus strongly on the following:

1. The Dramatic Process: content, issues and themes explored.
2. Drama Skills & Techniques: such as freeze-frames, role play, hot-seating, thought tracking and selecting the appropriate drama form/style.
3. Personal & Social Skills: such as organising, working in groups of mixed sizes/gender/friendships; listening/empathising; compromising/supporting.

## How You Can Help

- Encourage students to see live theatre and to research around topics explored in the lessons.
- Encourage students to get involved in extra-curricular activities e.g. drama clubs, school productions.

## Head of Expressive Arts Faculty/Subject:

Miss G Currie

## Grouping:

Mixed Ability

## Homework:

- Spellings.
- Research or creative tasks may be set in line with topic studied in class.

## Assessment (including coursework):

- Teacher assessment of students at the end of every topic. Assessments will focus on performance work and the creative/preparation process.
- Student self-assessment.

## Curriculum Enhancement Trips & Clubs

- Occasional workshops.
- School productions and Drama Club.
- Opportunity to see school-based performance work across year groups.

# English

## Content

At Key Stage 3 in English we study the following areas, based around Literacy, Language, Reading and Literature:

### Year 7

#### Autumn Term:

Heroes and Villains - Students will look at a range of extracts from a range of different texts, poetry, fiction, non-fiction, play, Shakespeare around the concept of Heroes and Villains. Key skills and objectives covered include AO2 - language and structural analysis and AO5&6 - creative writing.

#### Spring Term:

Fairy Tales - the same arrangement as the first scheme or work - students work through a range of extracts related to the theme and develop key skills that include AO2 analysis and AO1 - creating and understanding text and task.

#### Summer Term:

Mother Nature - students again work through a range of extracts from a range of texts and develop skills related to AO5&6 - creative writing.

### Year 8

#### Autumn Term:

Power and Conflict - much like year 7, each unit of work is related to an overarching theme. Power and conflict will explore three types of conflict - man, nature and inner conflict. Power will explore the impact of these three aspects. Key skills developed include AO3 - context in which the text was written and AO4 - comparison work linking texts together.

#### Spring Term:

Social responsibility - same as before - extracts from a variety of texts that all link to the theme of social responsibility. Key skills include AO2 - language and structure analysis.

#### Summer Term:

Identity - this theme explores the self, how we establish identity - who we are, who others are. Key skills include AO5&6-transactional writing.

#### Reading lessons:

These will be broken down into two areas - one library based lesson to utilise SPARX READER - a fantastic online reading tool to develop essential reading, comprehension skills. This is used in conjunction with the same software at home.

The second lesson will be a CLASS READER—this will be in form of either a fiction novel, modern play or Shakespeare play. The class will simply read and/or perform this, stopping and verbally discussing key moments around narrative, characterisation, setting, tone, writers intention or style.

## Head of Faculty:

Mr D Nunn

## Grouping:

Ability and effort based streaming

## Homework:

- Reading for pleasure for at least 30 minutes a week—use of Sparx Reader online
- Tassomai online platform learning—weekly goals met
- Class specific homework related to current class study
- Reading and understanding language analysis
- Writing exposure - writing a range of different text types
- Planning and drafting work
- Proof reading and editing
- Gathering information - researching and collating
- Rehearsing and practising speaking and performance.
- Learning homework: spelling and definitions around critical vocabulary

## Assessment (including homework projects):

- Deep Learning tasks related to specific unit of study (varying reading and writing tasks).
- Termly end of unit assessment related to the specific unit study.
- End of year writing exam (GCSE writing section style based)
- Speaking and Listening

# English

Key whole texts we will use for class readers include:

Kick by Mitch Johnson

Ash by Melinda Jo

The Tempest by William Shakespeare

Gangsta Rap by Benjamin Zephaniah

Animal Farm by George Orwell

Blood Brothers by Willy Russell

## Oracy Lessons:

Once a fortnight students will partake in an oracy based lesson—discussing and debating a related current topic. Topics include, social media, rights of passage, teenage life, technology, social conformity among others. Using Voice 21 strategies, students develop key skills of cognition, articulation, physical oracy and comprehension.

## Year 9

Will follow a very similar pattern in the final year of KS3, but differentiated through more mature themes such as segregation and other cultures. There is a step up as we begin to incorporate GCSE style questioning and responses that build on the key skills developed in year 7 and 8.

## How You Can Help:

- Check understanding and revision of learning homework.
- Read and discuss novels (both modern and pre 1914) with your children.
- Check homework on Satchel One for related tasks.
- Look at [www.bbc.co.uk/revision](http://www.bbc.co.uk/revision) for KS3 bitesize revision tasks.
- Ensure Sparx reader is used either on a home computer or phone.
- Tassomai is completed weekly.

## Curriculum Enhancement Trips & Clubs

### Year 7:

Reading and writing competitions  
Reading Club  
Author visits  
Creative Writing Club  
Mindfulness Club

# Geography

## Content

### Year 7:

#### Autumn:

- World Explorer
- Weather and Climate

#### Spring:

- Climate Change
- Population + Settlement
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#### Summer:

- Coast
- World Issues (plastics/sustainability)

### Year 8:

#### Autumn:

- Development Goals
- Glaciers

#### Spring:

- Rivers
- Middle East

#### Summer:

- Africa
- Fieldwork

## How You Can Help

- Please encourage students to add depth and detail to their homework.
- Encourage students to watch news and read newspapers.
- Show them you are interested in the subject.
- Discuss current affairs with your children.
- Ensure students are fully prepared with drawing pencils, colouring pencils, scissors and a glue stick.

### Head of Subject:

Mr T Ayling-Jones

### KS3 Co-ordinator

Miss H Buckle

### Grouping:

Mixed Ability

### Homework:

45 minutes every two weeks - Students are set tasks or project-based homework, generally on a two weekly basis.

### Assessment:

Work is awarded an effort grade. A National Curriculum (equivalent) Level is awarded each term.

### Curriculum Enhancement Trips & Clubs

- Key Stage 3 Geography Club.
- Activities and trips during Personal Development days.

# History

## Content

History provides an opportunity for students to discover how the world in which they live evolved. It gives a sense of purpose and understanding to their surroundings and enables them to understand the origins of the many political and social issues which they come across through the news, on a daily basis. The pursuit of history also helps develop life-long skills which can be used in other subjects and situations, enabling historians to ask pertinent questions, to process information and to effectively express opinions.

### During Year 7 the following themes will be covered:

- The History of the River Thames
- Romans, Persians and The Silk Roads
- The Vikings and the Norman Conquest
- Medieval Religion and Politics in the Middle ages
- The Tudors
- The Stuarts and the English Civil War

### During Year 8 the students will study:

- Industrialisation
- Slavery and the British Empire
- World War One
- The Interwar years
- The cause of WW2 and WW2 on the home front

### During Year 9 the students will study:

- WW2 and the theatres of war
- The Holocaust
- The fight for equality - Civil Rights
- Events Twentieth Century and Popular Culture
- Whitechapel Enquiry (start GCSE)

## How You Can Help

- Read through the extended writing exercises that are completed for homework.
- Help with the learning of key vocabulary which will need to be completed at home.
- Use the local library for relevant books on the topics being studied.
- Advise, encourage and question.
- See the resources on History Microsoft Teams page
- Encourage an avid interest in history TV/Books/Visits
- Use ClickView provision

## Head of Subject:

Mrs S Davies

## Grouping:

Mixed Ability and some setting

## Homework:

Homework will be based on reinforcing classwork and include a range of tasks designed to test different historical skills.

## Assessment:

Regular assessment against thresholds on a half-termly basis.

## Curriculum Enhancement Trips & Clubs

- History club
- Trip opportunities in Year 7-9 at key points linking to the curriculum.
- Residential Trips Abroad

2023 - Normandy  
2023 - Auschwitz

- Interior design club in history
- Residential Trip

2024 - York  
2025 - Munich and  
Nuremberg

# Computer Science & IT

## Content

Computer Science & IT is taught to all Year 7, 8 and 9 students as a discreet subject for one lesson per fortnight in an IT room. Students are given their own school network account as well as an office 365 account which is primarily used as their workspace.

### Year 7

#### Autumn Term:

Introduction to Online Accounts, E-safety and Effective use of Office applications and Introduction to Computer Science.

#### Spring Term:

Computer Networks and Spreadsheet Modelling.

#### Summer Term:

Scratch leading on to Python Programming.

### Year 8

#### Autumn Term:

Online Account Management, E-safety including; Online behaviours, digital footprints and body image and Computer Systems.

#### Spring Term:

Spreadsheets Modelling.

#### Summer Term:

Python Programming.

### Year 9

#### Autumn Term:

Online Account Management, E-safety including; Online behaviours, and Cybersecurity.

#### Spring Term:

Data Science.

#### Summer Term:

Physical Programming.

## How You Can Help

- Encourage your child to explain / show you what they have been using the computers for at school.
- Encourage your child to use the computers for serious school work.
- Remind them how to use the IT responsibly.
- Try to get them to use different software packages at home.
- Get your child to question information they find on the Internet.
- Get your child to explain how IT and computing is used in the real world, e.g. in the supermarket.
- Discuss how new IT technology and computing is reported in the media.
- Do you use technology at work? Discuss how you or your business uses it.

## Head of Faculty/Subject:

Ms L Byfield

## Grouping:

Mixed Ability

## Homework:

- This is a computer based activity set every two weeks.
- Suggested tasks can be found on "Satchel One".

## Assessment (including coursework):

- Each discipline is formatively assessed.
- A summative assessment forms the basis for reporting.

## Curriculum Enhancement Trips & Clubs

- A range of extra-curricular activities are available during lunchtime including coding.
- The CS faculty support students who want to enter IT/Computing competitions and attend events.
- The computer rooms are available during lunchtimes and after school until 4:30pm on most days for school work.



# Mathematics

## Content

In Year 7 Mathematics, students will cover a wide range of topics including number theory, algebra, geometry, statistics, and probability. Following the White Rose Scheme of Work, lessons will be structured to help students build a strong foundation in math. They'll participate in activities and lessons aimed at developing problem-solving skills and understanding mathematical concepts. By the end of the year, students will be equipped with the skills and confidence to tackle more advanced mathematical challenges. Some specific topics they will cover include:

### Solve problems:

- Problem solving and applications in a variety of contexts to develop reasoning, thinking and communication skills.

### Numbers:

- Number and arithmetic
- Approximations
- Powers
- Multiples, factors and primes
- Fractions and percentages

### Ratio, Proportion and

#### Rates of Change:

- Ratio and proportion
- Units and scales

### Algebra:

- Algebraic expressions
- Equations
- Formulas
- Sequences
- Graphs and equations

### Geometry and Measures:

- Angles and shapes
- Constructions
- Perimeter, area and volume
- Transformations
- Geometric relationships

### Probability:

- Probability experiments
- Theoretical probabilities

### Statistics:

- Statistical charts and diagrams
- Averages and range (incl. from tables)
- Scatter diagrams and correlation

## Head of Faculty/Subject:

Mr D Watson

## Grouping:

Two parallel groups of sets based on ability.

## Homework:

Homework is set weekly - online SPARX task or a written task. Duration:  
Years 7 & 8: 45 minutes

## Assessment:

Tests take place after each half-term, except in the Summer term where there is an end of year assessment.

## Curriculum Enhancement Trips & Clubs

- Years 7 & 8: Junior Maths Challenge
- Chess Club

## How You Can Help

- Encourage your child to complete homework on the night set.
- Practise times tables with your child and share your knowledge and understanding of mathematics.
- Encourage them to use SPARX and Mathswatch - login and passwords will be given to each student - to revise and explore new topics.
- Encourage your child to be inquisitive and independent learners by making good use of the internet to investigate and find answers for themselves.

# Modern Foreign Languages (German)

## Content

### Year 7

#### German - Stimmt 1 textbook

##### Autumn

- Module 1: Greetings and basic language  
(numbers, colours, alphabet, classroom equipment)  
Module 2: Introducing and describing myself, my family and pets

##### Spring

- Module 3: Free time  
Module 4: My routine and school

##### Summer

- Module 5: Town, shopping and holidays  
Module 6: Revision, exams and end of year project

### Year 8

#### German - Stimmt 2 textbook

##### Autumn

- Module 1: Holidays  
Module 2: Media

##### Spring

- Module 3: Healthy Lifestyle  
Module 4: Going on an exchange

##### Summer

- Module 5: Going out  
Module 6: Revision, exams and end of year project

★Students will continue with both languages in Year 8 and 9, they can choose a language to study at GCSE level.

## How You Can Help

- Impress on your child the value of a foreign language.
- Help your child with their lists of vocabulary for each half term by encouraging them to learn them each week.
- Encourage your child to speak to you in German.
- Make a conscious effort to learn with your child.
- Ensure that your child meets homework deadlines.
- Encourage your child to regularly use 'Active Learn' to improve their language skills outside the classroom.
- Ask your child regularly about the strategies used to achieve target grades.

## Head of Faculty:

Mrs E Kaye-Chubb

## Grouping:

Year 7: Sets 1 and 5  
The rest mixed ability

Year 8: Sets 1 - 5

## Homework:

- Written or non-written task set every two weeks and will include: learning vocabulary, completing online tasks, worksheets, translation tasks as well as a variety of creative tasks.
- Tasks will be shown on "Show my Homework" site.

## Assessment (including coursework):

- Continuous assessment.
- Two summative assessments per term.
- Exams in Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing at the end of the year.

## Curriculum Enhancement Trips & Clubs

Residential visits to Germany

# Modern Foreign Languages (French)

## Content

### Year 7

#### French - Studio 1 textbook

##### Autumn

Module 1: Greetings and basic language  
(numbers, colours, alphabet, classroom equipment)

Module 2: Describing myself and others

##### Spring

Module 3: My school and routine

Module 4: My free time

##### Summer

Module 5: Town and holidays

Module 6: Revision and end of year exams year project

### Year 8

#### French - Studio 2 textbook

##### Autumn

Module 1: Media

Module 2: Holidays

##### Spring

Module 3: My identity

Module 4: Where I live

##### Summer

Module 5: Talents and Ambitions

Module 6: Revision, exams and end of year project

★Students will continue with both languages in Year 8 and 9, they can choose a language to study at GCSE level.

## How You Can Help

- Impress on your child the value of a foreign language.
- Help your child with their lists of vocabulary for each half term by encouraging them to learn them each week
- Encourage your child to speak to you in French.
- Make a conscious effort to learn with your child.
- Ensure that your child meets homework deadlines.
- Encourage your child to regularly use 'Active Learn' to improve their language skills outside the classroom.
- Ask your child regularly about the strategies used to achieve target grades.

## Head of Faculty:

Mrs E Kaye-Chubb

## Grouping:

Year 7: Set 1 & Mixed Ability Groups

Year 8: Sets 1 - 4

## Homework:

- Written or non-written task set every two weeks and will include: learning vocabulary, completing online tasks, worksheets, translation tasks as well as a variety of creative tasks.
- Tasks will be shown on "Show my Homework" site.

## Assessment (including coursework):

- Continuous assessment.
- Two summative assessments per term.
- Exams in Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing at the end of the year.

## Curriculum Enhancement Trips & Clubs

A residential visit to France

# Music

## Content

Students learn to perform, compose and listen in a variety of different sized groups: solo, pair, small group, large group and whole class.

Students participate in the following musical activities:

- singing and playing a variety of music
- taking part in group performances
- planning, rehearsing and presenting performances
- improvising and arranging
- composing music in response to a variety of stimuli and exploring a range of resources
- recording compositions using notations and ICT (music technology)
- listening to and developing an understanding of music from different times and places
- responding to and evaluating music, including their own and others' compositions and performances.

### Year 7

Students will study a range of topics from the following list:

- Vocal Music
- The Elements of Music
- Rhythm in Ensemble (Samba)
- Timbre: Instruments of the orchestra
- Ground Bass and Remix
- Ostinati and Riffs
- Programme Music

### Year 8

Students will study a range of topics from the following list:

The Development of Popular Music: through the study of

- Blues
- Jazz
- Rock'n'roll
- Pop Music of the 80s/90s
- Britpop
- Songwriting
- These projects covers performing, improvising, composing and listening skills

### Year 9

Students will study a range of topics from the following list:

- Reggae
- Classical Era
- Film Music
- Minimalism
- Music and the Media: radio advert

## How You Can Help

- Encourage your child to listen regularly to a wide variety of music.
- Encourage participation in extra-curricular groups.
- Consider instrumental lessons for your child.

## Head of Subject:

Ms V Mace

## Grouping:

Mixed ability

## Homework:

- Two homework projects per year (approximately 6 weeks of each) as an extension of the Music curriculum units.

## Assessment (including coursework):

- Assessment of performing, composing, appraising, listening and applying knowledge and understanding.
- School assessment thresholds.

## Curriculum Enhancement Trips & Clubs

- Regular concert trips and visiting musicians.
- A wide variety of clubs including: Orchestra, Choir, Samba band, Keyboard club and pupil rock bands leading to regular performances throughout the year.
- Instrumental and vocal evening concerts.
- Private instrumental lessons.

# Physical Education

## Content

Charles Darwin School has a proud tradition for physical education and sport and boasts outstanding indoor and outdoor facilities to allow students to excel. There is an extensive range of intra and inter school sports which takes place and is fast gaining the school a reputation for sporting excellence. The PE department has high expectations and standards for every student and aims to develop the understanding of skills, techniques and tactical knowledge required to become outstanding sports performers.

Our aims:

- To provide opportunities for all students to participate in a competitive and varied physical activity and sports programme in the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms.
- To maximise the potential of all of our students by providing regular opportunities for organised and structured lessons geared towards raising achievement.
- To encourage and promote positive attitudes amongst all pupils towards physical activity and the pursuit of a healthy and active lifestyle.
- To provide opportunities for students to develop tactics, techniques and skills as well as an understanding of the rules for a range of activities.
- To develop personal and inter-personal skills through competition and teamwork in a manner which serve to underline the need for discipline, safety and consideration for others

**The sports offered in Year 7/8 are:**

Football	Badminton
Netball	Softball
Rugby	Health Related Fitness
Dance	Basketball
Gymnastics	Cricket
Trampolining	Stoolball
Rounders	Outdoor Adventurous Activities
Cricket	Alternative Activities (Volleyball, Ultimate Frisbee,
Athletics	American Football,
Table Tennis	Kinball, Gaelic Football, Handball)

## How You Can Help

- Ensure your child is fully aware of the requirements for P.E. kit.
- Ensure your child takes kit to school, regardless of an injury or illness they may be carrying.
- Encourage punctuality and reliability to extra-curricular and sports fixtures.
- Encourage engagement and awareness of the benefit of physical activity.
- Encourage an interest in major sporting events through different platforms e.g. TV, Podcast, Books and Live News.

## Head of Faculty:

Miss C Owen

## Grouping:

2 Tier (set by ability for boys and mixed for girls)

## Homework:

Does not apply in Year 7 and 8 - but an extensive extra-curricular programme supports the curriculum requirements. All students are welcome.

## Assessment (including coursework):

- Each discipline is formatively assessed through Physical ME, Cognitive ME and Social ME.
- Behaviour assessment is formatively assessed through Personal ME and Attitude ME.
- A summative assessment of effort and behaviour in each discipline forms the basis for reporting.

## Curriculum Enhancement Trips & Clubs

Timetable of extra-curricular

Provision is sent out weekly in the Link. It is also available on school website.

# Religious Education

## Content

RE gives students the knowledge, skills and understanding to play an effective role in society at local, national and international levels. It helps them to become informed, thoughtful and responsible citizens who are aware of their duties and rights. It encourages them to play a helpful part in the life of their schools, neighbourhoods, communities and the wider world. It encourages respect for different national, religious and ethnic identities. It helps pupils take part in discussion and debate.

Citizenship will help students to understand how they can make their voice heard and is a dynamic and exciting topic which creates a necessary awareness in today's world.

### Year 7

- What is Religion?
- Joan of Arc and Saints
- Places of worship around the world

### Year 8

- Peace and Conflict
- "An Eye for an Eye"
- Festival around the world

### Year 9

- Religion and the environment
- Medical ethics and Religion
- Marriage and the Family

## How You Can Help

- Encourage the daily reading of a broadsheet newspaper.
- Watch the news and discuss the global issues arising as a family.
- Use ClickView

### Head of Subject:

Ms S Davies

### Grouping:

Mixed Ability/some Setting

### Assessment:

N/A

### Curriculum Enhancement Trips & Clubs

There will opportunities to enhance the Curriculum through outside speakers, faculties working together and whole-day activities.

# Science

## Content

Each year we will study the topics listed below, with each group/set following a slightly different order. Four to five weeks are spent on each topic.

### Year 7

- Cells - the building blocks of life
- Eating, drinking and breathing
- Mixing, dissolving and separating
- Elements, compounds & reactions
- Forces and their effects
- Energy transfers and sound

### Year 8

- Getting the energy the body needs
- Explaining physical changes
- Contact and non contact forces
- Explaining chemical changes
- Magnetism and electricity
- Looking at plants and ecosystems

### Year 9

- Variation for survival
- Our health and the effect of drugs
- Obtaining useful materials
- Using our earth sustainably
- Motion on earth and in space

## How You Can Help

- Ensure your child has the correct equipment: HB pencil, glue, ruler, pen, colouring pencils, rubber, sharpener, and a calculator
- Purchase a study/revision guide for Key Stage 3. Collins is the scheme we use - ISBN 978-0007562824 or CGP is very good ISBN 978-1841463858
- Test your child, check through work, family trips to museums or other attractions, talk through TV programmes, etc.
- Use BBC Bitesize—KS3 section

## Head of Faculty:

Mr A Doig

## Grouping:

4 sets in the x half  
5 sets in the y half

## Homework:

This is set on a weekly basis in a variety of forms: research, writing up of practical activities, problem solving, learning of terms and spellings and literacy activities.

## Assessment

- There will be short tests on each topic throughout Key Stage 3.
- All pupils will sit Christmas, Easter and End of Year exams (June) using SAT-style questions.
- Students are given dates in advance and encouraged to prepare for each assessment

## Curriculum Enhancement Trips & Clubs

There are a number of trips and activities; these differ slightly each year.

# Technology

## Content

Students work through the design and make process using a range of materials, including food, to make a variety of products. They build up their knowledge and skills, and explore relevant industrial practices to create well-made products.

Subject areas covered during the three years include:

**Electronics:** making basic circuits and soldering joints.

**Industrial Practices:** using jigs, press moulds and computer aided design and manufacture.

**Graphics:** using traditional drawing techniques, ICT and Computer Aided Design. We focus on learning how to create well-presented work and design drawings

**Resistant Materials:** using a range of tools and equipment to create products made from paper, wood, card, plastics, modelling foam and metal.

**Food:** includes safety, hygiene and nutrition; also included are basic practical skills to prepare and make a range of food items.

### Year 7

Basic projects to introduce pupils to tools, equipment and materials. We ensure basic Health & Safety requirements are met, whilst introducing pupils to the different material areas.

### Year 8

Projects build in complexity.

## How You Can Help

- Provide your child with pens, pencils, coloured pencils and a ruler.
- Provide your child with an apron, container to take home and ingredients in Food lesson.
- Ensure that homework is always completed and check the website.
- Encourage/enable your child to carry out research on shopping trips to DIY stores, your local supermarket etc.
- Get children involved in putting together flat-pack furniture and understand DIY and maintenance around the home.

### Head of Technology:

Mr R Baker

### Grouping:

Mixed Ability

### Homework:

Set to reinforce knowledge, to carry out research and to prepare for project work as well as prepare students for exam.

Homework is available on 'Satchel One' where extension work and assessment criteria can be found.

### Assessment (including coursework):

Students work through a range of projects that are marked in whole levels with advice provided on how to improve. Project levels are amalgamated into the whole school CAPP system reporting 3 times per year.

End of year exams provide essential exam practice.

### Curriculum Enhancement Trips & Clubs

Material/Food contribution: Each student is asked for £10 to cover materials and buy ingredients. Students will bring home everything they make.



# Notes



*Aspire – Endeavour – Achieve*