

Key Stage 3

Curriculum Information

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INTRODUCTION

Key Stage 3 (Years 7 – 9) forms a pupil's first years in Senior School. It acts, therefore, as the transitional stage between Junior School and the start of courses for external examinations after Year 9.

The purpose of the academic curriculum in Key Stage 3 is to ensure that pupils gain a firm foundation in the subjects they may wish to take to GCSE. Some subjects – Maths, English and Science – are part of the core curriculum up to GCSE level and they consequently have rather more time spent on them at Key Stage 3 level. All other subjects eventually become options and so it is important that breadth is maintained in the early part of secondary school. There is thus a broad balance between other subjects – humanities, languages, creative subjects and PE.

Of course, education is about much more than academic work and it is very important that pupils participate in the wider life of the School. Not only do we want all our pupils to do as well as they can academically, we want them to become confident people and responsible citizens. Involvement in our wide range of extra-curricular activities – sport, drama, music, societies, Council – will help them to develop the necessary attributes to enjoy and participate in life to the full. Indeed, the development of character and personality through participation in all the School has to offer will lead to stronger academic performance.

We trust that a pupil's time in Key Stage 3 will allow them to expand the abilities they have already begun to reveal in Junior School. It should prepare them for the challenges of the greater academic demands of external examinations and encourage them to grasp the opportunities that adolescence and increasing maturity bring.

THE KEY STAGE 3 CURRICULUM

Subject hours each week

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English	3	3	3
Maths	3	3	3
Science	3	3	3
Spanish	1	2	2
French	2	2	2
Geography	2	2	2
History	2	2	2
Design Technology	1	1	1
Art	1	1	1
Music	1	1	1
Drama	1	1	1
PSHE/ICT (+CAD in Yrs 8 & 9)	1	1	1
Physical Education	2	2	2
Swimming (Yr 7)	1		
Options	1-2	1-2	1-2

Many lessons in Years 7 and 8 are taught in Company/Registration or other mixed ability groups. In Maths, classes are set according to ability after the Autumn half term holiday. Science is set according to ability in Year 9. Some other subjects introduce setting arrangements in later years.

Homework is seen as an essential part of pupils' learning.

In Years 7, 8 and 9 pupils may expect to have 45-90 minutes each evening on school days. Homework timetables are issued at the beginning of each year. **Homework tasks** need not be formal or written assignments. The intention is to provide a range of tasks that are purposeful, enjoyable and varied and to ensure a balance of activities.

Homework assignments are recorded by students in their **Homework Diaries**. In this way, they are able to organise their time, and parents can keep track of homework. Advisers monitor the use of diaries and sign them each week. Parents are encouraged to check homework diaries and use them to communicate with teachers.

Various assessments are made early in the Autumn Term. These include a **Group Reading Test**, which is part of the English Department's strategy to improve reading levels at Key Stage 3, and **MidYIS (Middle Years Information System) Tests** which are designed primarily for monitoring Value-Added for individuals and the whole year group.

KEY STAGE 3 REPORTS AND PARENT MEETINGS 2009-10

We issue reports four times each year in Years 7 to 9. There are two Interim Reports which are brief "snapshots" of current performance and progress and two Full Reports which provide more detailed information at the end of the Autumn Term and at the end of the year.

All the reports are linked to individual pupil records in the main school database. They are, therefore readily available for consultation and monitoring purposes.

Parent Consultation Meetings are held in the Sports Hall. They usually focus on one year group at a time and appointments should be made in advance. Booking sheets are mailed to parents of day pupils. There is one consultation which is open to all years in May.

Reports Issued	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Parent Meetings	
				Tuesday October 6 @ 1830 <i>Consultation</i>	Year 7
October 23	Interim	Interim	Interim		
December 18	Full	Full	Full		
				Tuesday January 19 @1830 <i>Consultation & GCSE Options meeting</i>	Year 9
				Thursday January 28 @ 1830 <i>Consultation</i>	Year 8
February 12	Interim				
				Wednesday 17 March @1830 <i>Consultation</i>	Year 7
March 23		Interim	Interim		
				Saturday May 8 (0930am-1200pm) <i>Consultation</i>	OPEN
July 9	Full	Full	Full		

OPTIONS AND ACTIVITIES PROGRAMMES

The Options Programme at St Christopher is a unique and integral part of the School curriculum which takes place on one afternoon, with some Options continuing beyond the School day, for all students from Years 7-12. The aim of the Options Programme is to give students an opportunity to expand their horizons, learn and develop new skills and discover new opportunities.

The Options Programme will run over four 8-week blocks throughout the school year. Additionally, there will be two Conference Afternoons, which are whole School events designed to inspire and challenge students by providing an opportunity to discuss and act upon issues raised. On previous Conference Days we have hosted events given by musicians, storytellers and speakers from across the world, who have used workshops and performances to raise awareness of ecological and fair trade issues, cultural diversity and charitable causes, for example.

Students are able to select their preferred Option from a broad range of topics – Creative, Physical, Service/Social Awareness and Academic. Whilst we endeavour to give each student their preferred choice, obviously some Options are more popular than others in which case they will be allocated to their next choices.

THE LIBRARY

The Library is open to all pupils all day, including break and lunchtime, and in the evening after school. Children are welcome to come and do homework, read quietly or use the computers.

Year 7 pupils have an introduction to the Library at the beginning of the Autumn Term during their English lessons, and all pupils from Year 7 – 9 Group are encouraged to borrow books from the Library for their reading lessons. The Library has a very good range of up-to-date fiction from which to choose, and themed booklists are available to help with reading suggestions. The Library staff are always very happy to suggest suitable books for children who are struggling to choose what to read next.

We have a flourishing Lower School Book Club, and usually take part in the Hertfordshire 'Children's Choice' Book Discussion Day. The Librarian works closely with the English Department to encourage and reinforce reading skills and enjoyment. We have collaborated on many exciting joint activities, such as visiting authors, poets, storytellers and writing workshops.

Information Skills sessions are organised for Year 7 pupils by the Librarian, in conjunction with the Science Department, using a range of electronic and printed information resources. The Library itself has a collection of approximately 14,000 books and audio books, most of which are available to borrow. We also have two daily papers and lots of magazines covering a wide range of subjects, some educational and some just for fun.

TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

There are two **Key Stage 3 Curriculum Days** each year with excursions for all pupils in Years 7-9 organised by the Geography, Science, History, Arts and CDT departments. These days include visits to museums, galleries, places of historical interest and sites suitable for field studies.

Optional Trips

Skiing Trip to Austria, February 12 - 20, open to all members of Years 7-13.

Outdoor Pursuits weekends to various locations throughout the year.

LATE SUMMER PROGRAMME (LSP)

The **Year 7 LSP** will go to Aberdovey Outward Bound. Situated close to the Welsh coastal village of Aberdovey, this well established residential centre is in an excellent position to offer a range of outdoor activities. Our students will take part in a five-day 'Adventure and Challenge' programme, run by Outward Bound instructors and supported by St Christopher School staff. The course aims to provide a wide variety of adventurous and challenging activities, delivered in a progressive manner and supported by reflective reviewing. This will be the second year this trip has run and promises to be another week of real educational value and great fun too!

Year 8, with its programme of challenging outdoor activities (these include climbing, caving, water sports, abseiling, and gorge-scrambling) aims to introduce pupils to a wide range of exciting and enjoyable activities that involve both teamwork and personal challenge.

The trip to Saas Fee in **Year 9** brings pupils to a high Alpine environment, where a wide range of activities (e.g. Art work in nature, climbing, orienteering and walks of varying length and difficulties) are on offer. These provide opportunities to meet appropriate challenges, work on team-building and learn about themselves and the fragile mountain environment. Clear curriculum links exist between this programme and Geography, Art, and ICT (through video editing).

THE SCHOOL YEAR 2009-10

AUTUMN TERM 2009

Begins	Tuesday	1 September	staff
	Wednesday	2 September	LVI only
	Wednesday eve.	2 September	boarders
	Thursday	3 September	day scholars
Half Term begins	Friday 1555	23 October	
Half Term ends	Sunday eve.	1 November	boarders
	Monday	2 November	day scholars
Term ends	Friday 1200	18 December	

SPRING TERM 2010

Begins	Friday	8 January	staff
	Sunday	10 January	boarders
	Monday	11 January	day scholars
Half Term begins	Friday 1555	12 February	
Half Term ends	Sunday eve.	21 February	boarders
	Monday	22 February	day scholars
Term ends	Friday 1200	26 March	

SUMMER TERM 2010

Begins	Friday	16 April	staff
	Sunday	18 April	boarders
	Monday	19 April	day scholars
May Bank Holiday	Monday	3 May	
Half Term begins	Friday 1555	28 May	
Half Term ends	Sunday eve.	6 June	boarders
	Monday	7 June	day scholars
Summer Fair – compulsory for Senior School students	Saturday	19 June	
Senior Lessons end	Friday 1200	2 July	
LSP Week		3 July – 9 July	
School Year ends	Friday 1200	9 July	all others

PRESENTATION OF WORK

Quality is usually better than quantity

Pupils should:

- always have a pen, pencil and ruler in lessons;
- write the date on their work;
- provide a suitable heading or title, underline it with a ruler and leave a line;
- write in blue or black ink. Pencils and coloured inks should not be used for *writing* except for specific purposes or if required by a pupil's IEP;
- start each line at the margin unless indenting for a new paragraph.
- draft work whenever possible: edit, rework and proof-read;
- keep notebooks and folders in good condition. Pages should not be removed and there should be no graffiti on or in books and folders: pupils will be required to cover or replace defaced books.

When word processing, pupils should:

- use a conventional font (like Times New Roman or Arial) at 10-12 font size for normal writing tasks, like essays and notes;
- use decorative fonts and other font sizes only when there is a clear reason for doing so;
- use italics only for specific purposes: emphasis, titles within sentences etc;
- always check that printed sheets are headed with names and dates;
- use spell-checking with care.

Support the school's environmentally friendly policies by writing on both sides of pages, using up exercise books and taking great care when printing from a computer. Waste paper should be recycled whenever possible.

HOW TO DRAFT...

All writers draft their work. There are **two** main purposes.

1. CONTENT

- Is the writing interesting and relevant? Does it answer the question?
- Is there anything missing?
- Can you find more precise words?
- Is it too short or too long?
- Does it have a strong beginning and ending?
- Is your material in the best order and organised into paragraphs?

2. ACCURACY

- Proof-read your work! **You** must take responsibility for spelling, punctuation and grammar. Do not leave it to your teacher.
- Ask someone to help with problems you cannot solve.

Symbols commonly used by your teachers

Marginal symbols	Usually underlined
SP	Spelling error
P	Punctuation error.
exp	Error in expression of Standard English
?	Unclear
Other Symbols	
//	New Paragraph
^	Omission
✓	Correct answer (or good point)

ENGLISH

The English Department is on the first floor of the new ICT building with 4 classrooms, a seminar room for Sixth Form teaching as well as storage and office space.

We see it as our role to awaken children to the power and excitement of language, both in their own speech and writing and in works of literature.

It is through language that we explore and understand the world about us, we come to know ourselves and others and we discover how to learn and how to make choices and judgements. At the heart of this process is response to literature.

Enjoyment in reading, the sharing of ideas and a sense of purpose and value in their own writing will develop children's literacy more than anything; these are at the centre of our practice.

In each year's work:

- there is an appropriate **balance** of reading, writing, speaking and listening;
- there is an appropriate **variety** of audience and purpose in pupils' written and oral work;
- pupils work in a variety of groupings;
- opportunity is given for thorough **preparation, drafting, editing and correction** of written work;
- clear **presentation** and effective lay-out are emphasised;
- **skills** are taught explicitly and reinforced through tasks.

There is progression in expectations throughout the three years with increasing emphasis in Year 9 on sense of audience and formality in written tasks.

Each year has certain key texts and topics which are studied; other texts and topics are left to individual teachers' judgement within the general framework.

Year 7	Key texts: Fat Boy Swim (Catherine Forde); A Midsummer Night's Dream; The Signalman (Charles Dickens); extracts from Chaucer, Shakespeare, Dickens, Austen, and novelists and poets from various different periods of English literature. Key topics: The Development of the English Language; Advertising
Year 8	Key texts: 'Animal Farm'; 'Much Ado about Nothing'; 'Flour Babies'; 'Holes' Key topics: the power of words; narrative structure; literature in context
Year 9	Key texts: 'Of Mice and Men'; 'Frankenstein' and the Gothic; 'Romeo and Juliet'; 'Private Peaceful'. Key topics: sonnets; media texts; introduction to the Romantic poets; literary analysis; writing for an audience

MATHEMATICS

The Mathematics Department comprises five staff, all of whom are well qualified; all teach mathematics throughout the Senior School including A Level. The Department has four classrooms in the building known as Ladybarn. All classrooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards.

In Year 7, pupils are taught in mixed-ability groups for the first half term. Following a test across the year group and discussions amongst the Department, pupils are then placed in ability groups. As a Department we strongly believe that ability grouping ensures that all pupils progress at the pace that suits them. When necessary, pupils move between groups.

The programme of work varies between ability groups. The programme more or less follows the National Curriculum with the top set working well above the expected National Curriculum level. Mathematics is taught in a cyclical way in that topics are revisited to most years, revised and extended further. Therefore, some topics appear in more than one year. Detailed programmes of study are available on the School's intranet. By the end of Year 9 all pupils will be ready to progress onto the GCSE programme of study. The majority of pupils will enter GCSE at Higher Level, although a very small minority will enter at Foundation Level.

Assessment and Homework

Homework is set and marked twice a week. Homework and regular class tests are used to monitor progress. All years have two formal examinations – at the end of the Autumn and Summer Terms.

The programme of study detailed on the next page is the core material expected to be covered in each year. Pupils in top sets will cover additional topics and study topics listed in greater depth.

Year 7	<p>Number: arithmetic consolidation, order of operations, prime numbers, LCM – HCF, fractions (addition and subtraction), decimals, negative numbers, percentages, rounding.</p> <p>Algebra: introduction to algebra, simplifying, linear equations, formulae, number patterns, line graphs.</p> <p>Space and Shape: introduction to geometry, the coordinate system, symmetry, metric units, angles of a triangle, perimeter, area of rectangles and triangles, volume of cuboids, LOGO.</p> <p>Data Handling: probability, collecting, summarising and presenting data.</p>
Year 8	<p>Number: fractions (multiplication and division), ratio and proportion, using a calculator, estimation, percentages, significant figures.</p> <p>Algebra: simplifying expressions, factorising expressions, linear equations, equations of straight line graphs.</p> <p>Space and Shape: parallel lines and angles, area of parallelograms and trapeziums, triangles and quadrilaterals, transformations, bearings, scale drawing.</p> <p>Data Handling: pie charts, summarising and comparing data, scatter graphs, stem and leaf diagrams.</p>
Year 9	<p>Number: fractions, decimals and percentages, ratio and proportion, indices.</p> <p>Algebra: formulae and sequences, quadratic graphs, linear equations, simultaneous equations, inequalities, travel graphs.</p> <p>Space and Shape: area and circumference of a circle, Pythagoras' Theorem, polygons, scale drawing, volumes, transformations.</p> <p>Data Handling: mean from a frequency table, probability, organising and summarising data.</p>

SCIENCE

The Department has its own building and comprises six labs and associated prep rooms. There are seven teaching staff and two lab technicians.

In the first two years our primary aims are that pupils should develop an interest in Science and learn how to carry out investigations and write about their findings. Pupils have one teacher for all their Science classes, and the groups are not set. During the third year we put more emphasis on the development of structured ideas, in preparation for the GCSE courses to come. In this year pupils are loosely set by aptitude. All pupils continue with Science to GCSE level.

In Years 7 and 8 the course is based on the Spotlight Science scheme of work: not all topics are covered but extra modules are added. The topics are taught in different orders for different groups to optimise use of equipment. The course is broken up into units covering Physics, Chemistry and Biology.

Year 7	<p>Safety and investigating Science: All groups start with this topic.</p> <p>Matter: Solids, liquids and gases; dissolving and diffusion.</p> <p>Energy: Renewable and non-renewable sources of energy and energy transfers. This topic is with the Library Skills sessions run by the Librarian.</p> <p>Forces: Description and measurement of forces and simple machines.</p> <p>Cells, tissues and organs: This topic allows the students to become familiar with the use of a microscope.</p> <p>Feeding relationships: Populations, food chains and adaptations. A trip to the zoo is included.</p> <p>Acids and alkalis: The use of indicators, acid rain and the practical application of neutralisation.</p>
Year 8	<p>Using Forces: Structures including an engineering challenge, the calculation of speed and distance/time graphs.</p> <p>Elements: An introduction to Chemistry and is followed, later in the year, by Chemical reactions. These include rusting, burning and thermal decomposition.</p> <p>Growing up: Sexual reproduction, with the emphasis on humans and the changes associated with puberty.</p> <p>Earth and Space: The study of the solar system. This topic is used to develop library and ICT skills further.</p> <p>Light: Reflection, refraction, colour and the electro-magnetic spectrum.</p> <p>Variety of Life: The living world with the emphasis on the animal kingdom. The students produce a poster about an endangered species and meet many living organisms.</p>

Year 9	<p><i>There are separate lessons in Chemistry, Physics and Biology.</i></p> <p>Chemistry: During the Autumn Term the pupils do work on the various gases in the air, are taught about the Chemistry involved in burning, and look at some problems of atmospheric pollution, such as acid rain and the greenhouse effect. In the Spring Term they learn about the reactivity series, and come to an understanding of how we obtain our metals. The Summer Term is about water supplies, the problems caused by hard water, and the production and use of alcohol, both as a drink and a fuel.</p> <p>Physics: The syllabus is divided into three main topics. Study of heat transfer includes conduction, convection and radiation. We look at how these affect heat losses around the home and how heat loss can be reduced. In the section on waves, we study the basic nomenclature and phenomena which are common to all types of waves. Wave motion in water, light and air are studied in depth. The third topic is energy and its utilisation in society. We look at how electricity can be generated from fossil fuels, nuclear and alternative energy resources, which includes biomass, geothermal, wind, solar, hydroelectric. In all cases we look at how these affect the environment and global warming.</p> <p>Biology: During the first term pupils study the central role that energy - and its supply via respiration - has to play within humans. Topics covered include aerobic respiration, breathing and the effect of exercise on human ventilation and heart rate; lung and heart structure and function; cells, tissues and organ systems; anaerobic respiration and oxygen debt; photosynthesis and its relationship to respiration; anaerobic; the structure and function of blood tissue and the circulatory system. The second term's work is on diet and nutrition. Topics covered include: types of food and the importance of a balanced diet; nutritional requirements of humans; the structure and function of the alimentary canal; the role of enzymes in digestion and absorption. The third term is spent looking at the ways in which the body defends itself against disease. Topics covered include: types of disease and the microorganisms responsible for causing disease; the body's external defences; the function of the immune system; and vaccination.</p>
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Homework and tests

Pupils are set regular homework. During the course of Years 7 to 9 they will sit a number of topic tests which allow them and their teachers to see how well they are doing. In Year 9, there is a test in each of the three Sciences at the end of each term. Results of these tests are an important guide when we come to set pupils for the GCSE years and the attainment grades given on reports are usually based on them.

MODERN LANGUAGES

The department has excellent facilities and resources, including interactive whiteboards, satellite TV and a range of other audio visual aids. All the staff in the department teach their respective languages at native speaker standard.

Teaching languages is an exercise in communication skills as well as an academic exercise. In every lesson several activities are offered, which will practise different language skills. Authentic materials (magazines, letters, television programmes, and websites) are therefore presented to the learners at the earliest opportunity.

During each course equal importance is given to the four language acquisition skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Receptive skills (listening and reading) are always preceding the active production of language (speaking and writing), thus allowing all students to acquire language skills at their appropriate level. A variety of approaches (like pair-work, completing questionnaires, group work, quizzes, games) and a range of different audio-visual aids help to make lessons interesting and relevant. Cross-curricular links are sought wherever possible.

Differentiation is an important aspect of our language work.

Our specific aims are to maintain and/or stimulate lasting pupil curiosity, interest and enjoyment in the chosen Modern Foreign Languages and to create an atmosphere where pupils wish to learn, so that they come to enjoy the chosen Modern Foreign Language(s), because they are active participants in it.

FRENCH

Year 7	<p>The aim of this year's work is to help pupils to communicate in French, and gain an active awareness of language in general. The skills of speaking and listening are emphasised over those of reading and writing, although these will also be present for consolidation.</p> <p>We use the Equipe 1 textbook, workbook and other resources. These provide practice using all learning styles, as well as offering extension where appropriate.</p>
Year 8	<p>In their second year of Senior School French pupils continue to communicate in French, and gain an active awareness of language in general. Reading and writing now have a higher profile, and pupils are expected to produce more extended, challenging and imaginative pieces of written work. More extended passages of French than were seen in Year 7 are expected to be understood when read.</p> <p>We use the Equipe 2 textbook, workbook and other resources.</p>
Year 9	<p>In their third year of Senior School French pupils continue to communicate in French, and gain an active awareness of language in general.</p> <p>Pupils are encouraged to co-operate and work with others as well as working individually.</p> <p>We use the Equipe 3 textbook and other resources. With the associated workbook, these provide practice and consolidation, as well as offering opportunities for extension. Language points covered include verb + infinitive, the perfect tense, elements of the imperfect and the conditional, and various forms of adjectives and pronouns. By the end of Year 9, we hope that pupils are able to make an informed decision about studying a language in their GCSE programme.</p>

SPANISH

In the Spanish course we encourage positive communication, the primary communication skills of Listening and Speaking are stressed over those of Reading and Writing. The target language is used whenever practical.

Year 7	<p>The aim of this year's work is to introduce pupils to the Spanish language and culture. The skills of speaking and listening are emphasised over those of reading and writing, although these will also be present for consolidation.</p> <p>We use the Listos 1 textbook, workbook and other resources. These provide practice using all learning styles, as well as offering extension where appropriate.</p> <p>Self and family: greetings, names, age, birthday, animals and family members.</p> <p>The world around us: School objects, school subjects, Giving opinions about school, typical Spanish food and drinks and places in town.</p>
Year 8	<p>Everyday activities: school, food and drink, time and daily routine.</p> <p>Personal and social life: family, describing people, pets, free time and eating out.</p> <p>The world around us : Spanish speaking world, places in town, directions, countries and nationalities</p> <p>Home life: rooms in the house, description and location of objects, and house chores.</p>
Year 9	<p>Grammar covered in Year 9 includes: pronouns, adjectives, the future, past tenses and modal verbs. Pupils learn vocabulary and phrases about the following topics: clothes, shopping, describing films and programmes, holidays, parts of the body, health and remedies in the pharmacy, sports and fitness and education.</p> <p>The course makes use of the Listos course books which allow for a similar approach to the one used in French.</p>

Homework and Assessment

Assignments are designed to help pupils to reinforce what they have learnt in class and to consolidate their progress. They also give pupils valuable experience of working to deadlines.

Homework tasks are commensurate with the ability of the students and include a wide variety of tasks (including preparation for tests, learning vocabulary, preparing for written and oral presentations and reading).

The School has subscribed to the Asset Languages Scheme which is linked to the Government's languages ladder and offers officially recognised qualifications at KS3. Exams in all four language acquisition skills are taken by French learners in Year 8 and Spanish learners in Year 9. Pupils thus get an early opportunity to experience public examination conditions and expectations.

HISTORY

History is taught by experienced and highly qualified teachers. It is taught mainly in a dedicated History suite, with developing access to multi-media.

The staff believes in teaching History with a positive and enthusiastic approach utilising a variety of strategies such as role-play, discussion and debate, film, poetry and literature and drama. The aim of History is to enable students to develop an understanding of cause and consequence, change and continuity, and the use of source material. There is a particular focus on primary source material.

Year 7	<p>The syllabus includes three topics:</p> <p>1) Medieval England (from 1066-1485) - this includes 1066 and its impact on England, social history (lifestyles of rich and poor), development of Parliament, development of towns, key events (Black Death, Peasants' Revolt), medieval Kingship, Wars of the Roses.</p> <p>2) Tudor England (1485-1603) - this focuses on religious and political change - Henry VIII and his problems, the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the Break with Rome, the succession, Edward VI and Protestantism, Mary I and historical bias, Elizabeth - royal images, the problem of Mary Queen of Scots, the Armada.</p> <p>3) The Romans - what they did for us, the beginnings of Rome, the growth of the Roman Empire, the Roman army, various aspects of social history, Julius Caesar, the Emperors, the impact of Christianity, the collapse of the Empire.</p>
Year 8	<p>This syllabus addresses the theme of the struggle for rights from the 17th century into the early 20th century through a study of the following topics:</p> <p>Stuart England – the English Revolution 1640-49, Cromwell and the Protectorate, the Restoration, and the establishment of a constitutional monarchy.</p> <p>The French Revolution 1774-1779 and/or the American Revolution 1770-1788.</p> <p>The Slave Trade and Slavery, the Abolition Movement.</p> <p>The Industrial Revolution and its impact on British society.</p> <p>The struggle for women's rights from 1750-1918.</p>
Year 9	<p>This syllabus provides an outline study of world conflict and conflict resolution in the 20th century. Specific topics include:</p> <p>Origins, course and effects of the First World War, including the Versailles Settlement and its aftermath.</p> <p>The Russian Revolution, the rise of Stalin and Soviet dictatorship.</p> <p>The growth of Fascism: Europe between the wars, Mussolini and Hitler.</p> <p>Causes and course of World War Two.</p> <p>The aftermath of World War Two and the development of the Cold War, including Korea and Vietnam.</p>

The History Department follows the School policy on assessment and homework. On occasion homeworks will be in the form of large-scale research projects. Work is assessed according to departmentally-agreed criteria with which pupils are familiar.

GEOGRAPHY

Geography is the study of the earth, its places and the people that live there. It is a dynamic subject that has to keep changing as the world around us keeps changing. Pupils study a range of topics during Key Stage 3, focussed around five core questions:

- Where is this place?
- What is it like?
- Why is it like this?
- How is it changing?
- How do these changes affect the people that live there?

Pupils will study the following topics:

Year 7	Map Skills Settlement Rocks, Landforms, Coastal and River Processes
Year 8	Weather and Climate Ecosystems, focussing on Tropical Rainforests Energy and Resources
Year 9	Development Globalisation, Fair Trade and Aid European Issues (including tourism, hazards in Europe and the EU)

Pupils work on these topics through a range of activities. Alongside the more traditional geographical skills, such as using OS maps, they learn to interpret photos and satellite images. Pupils work both individually and as part of groups to produce written work, display work and oral presentations.

Each year group go on at least one field trip each year. Year 7 visits Walton-on-the-Naze to study coastal erosion; Year 8 visits Kew Gardens to support their work on Ecosystems; and Year 9 visits Thorpe Park to learn about the impact of tourism on the environment, as well as learning the data collection skills that they will use in their GCSE Coursework. They are also taken into Letchworth and the surrounding areas to reinforce work completed in the classroom.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

In Key Stage 3 pupils receive two one hour lessons per week in addition to Swimming in Year 7 which is taught to every pupil once per week. The lessons will generally take the form of a warm up, a skills session and a game. The students are all assessed using the National Curriculum Key Stage descriptors. Over the course of the first two terms each pupil will take part in seven different sports.

The main school sports in the Autumn and Spring Terms are Football, Basketball and Rugby for the boys and Netball for the girls. In the summer term the boys compete at Cricket and Tennis and girls at Rounders and Tennis. We also enter our athletes at District level. Every age group is given the opportunity of competing against other schools at these sports.

The main focus of the games lessons in Key Stage 3 is to learn skills that can be used in competitive situations. This means that students will learn a different skill used in a game in a non-competitive situation with the focus on learning the correct technique. Once the technique is learnt then the situation will be made more competitive until the pupil can perform the technique correctly in a game situation.

Year 7	Autumn Term and Spring Term. Gymnastics, Ball Skills, Rugby, Football x 2, Team Building Swimming, Netball x 2 , Health Related Fitness (H.R.F.), Basketball, Cross-Country, Lacrosse. Summer Term Athletics Track, Athletics Field, Cricket, Rounders, Softball, Tennis.
Year 8	Autumn Term and Spring Term. Gymnastics, Basketball, Rugby, Hockey, Football x 2, H.R.F., Swimming, Cross-Country, Netball x 2. Summer Term Athletics Track, Athletics Field, Cricket, Tennis, Rounders, Softball.
Year 9	Autumn Term and Spring Term. Basketball, Badminton, Rugby, Football x 2, Lacrosse, H.R.F., Trampolining. Gymnastics and Dance, Cross-country, Netball x 2, Hockey. Summer Term Athletics Track, Softball, Athletics Field, Cricket, Tennis, Rounders.

ART AND DESIGN

The students in each year group follow projects led by the individual member of staff working from the three themes from the relevant scheme of work. The schemes are devised to acknowledge the National Curriculum skills and concepts involved in investigating, making, knowledge and understanding. All experiences offered in a given project are designed to build on previous experiences, providing a developing programme of learning over the three years.

The projects are as follows:

Year 7	Self Image, Pattern and Landscape
Year 8	Organic Forms, Symbols and Graphic Design
Year 9	Figure and Artist Sketchbook

Students concentrate on observation, recording, colour, line, mark-making, shape, space, tone, texture, pattern, form and composition. Drawing and digital skills are core whilst other media experienced include ceramics, printmaking, textiles, painting, mixed-media and 3D construction.

During Year 9, students reinforce and build upon the concepts covered previously, working in an increasingly independent way, particularly so from the Spring Term onwards. Students will be shown how to link apparently diverse ideas, think laterally and encouraged to explore their own interpretation of the project. This will form the basis of work that, with guidance, will prepare the students for a modus operandi that the department sees as an appropriate approach for GCSE study.

CRAFT DESIGN + TECHNOLOGY

Work at KS3 is based around a progression of practical projects which involve a wide range of materials, tools and machines. In addition there are a series of worksheets and tests which cover theory and graphical aspects of the subject.

Each practical project reflects the design process, involving pupils in research, creative sketching and accurate planning drawings. Practical skills are developed through practice work, scaled model-making and the final main practical realisation. The aim with projects is for pupils to enjoy themselves, to become increasingly skilful and knowledgeable - and to work co-operatively within the workshop environment.

Pupils enjoy making well crafted products and are proud to take them home. As pupils progress through KS3 the project briefs become more open ended, allowing for increasingly creative solutions to be pursued over a longer period.

The worksheets are directly linked to half-termly tests. Revision for these forms the bulk of homework throughout the year.

The content includes:

- tools and machines;
- materials and their properties;
- environmental issues;
- joining techniques;
- graphical skills;
- annotated design challenges.

Year 7	Projects in Year 7 are designed to involve a focussed set of materials and tools / machines. This is to ensure a common 'foundation' experience for all pupils. Typical projects might include: acrobat figures, photo holders, enamel pendants.
Year 8	Projects in Year 8 include more detailed work with focussed materials such as sheet aluminium and acrylic. Projects might include: candle holders, 3D wooden clocks, flat pack chair design.
Year 9	Projects in Year 9 allow even wider room for creativity, are more complex and usually last longer. Projects might include: automata, wooden toys to be made and sent to our link schools in Rajasthan.

The CDT department also teaches **Computer Aided Design** as a separate series of lessons for Year 8 and Year 9.

DRAMA

The Department enjoys the twin facilities of a fully equipped Theatre and Studio. All classes are taught by specialist Drama teachers.

Through a mix of scripted and unscripted work, the course aims to develop the students' theatre skills (primarily voice and physicality), their imagination and creativity and their social skills. All lessons are essentially practical in nature and conducted in a safe and supportive environment. The Department recognises that Drama not only teaches Theatre but also develops awareness of self and others, nurturing confidence and social responsibility. Most lessons have a four-fold structure: 1) warm-up; 2) main activity; 3) performance; 4) evaluation/plenary.

All students are also taught Dance as part of the drama curriculum and can expect to spend a unit of work per year developing their dance skills.

Although, there is some flexibility to respond to the needs of particular groups, a typical programme of study would be as follows:

Year 7	Jabberwocky A Christmas Carol (Scripted Version) Dance Mask work Willow Pattern Legend
Year 8	A Midsummer Night's Dream Mime Melodrama Dance Improvisation
Year 9	The Exam (Andy Hamilton) Commedia dell'Arte Devising

Assessment and Homework

Assessment is formative. Evaluative feedback is given orally in lessons and grades awarded in interim reports. Due to the practical nature of the subject, homework is rarely set in Key Stage 3.

MUSIC

Pupils are encouraged to gain confidence, understanding, enjoyment and musical enrichment through a variety of activities and approaches. Lessons are predominantly practical music-making sessions, where singing is the norm and all children have access to musical instruments and to our modern, high-quality ICT and recording suite. Group work, performance and sharing of ideas occur regularly.

Key guidance from National Curriculum documentation and DCSF circulars are adapted for implementation at St Christopher. The innovative and highly-regarded "Musical Futures" programme, centring on positive self-learning, is a key influence, especially for Year 9.

Year 7	<p>Bridging Unit: an introduction to the elements of music and core musical skills.</p> <p>Performing Together: learning different parts of music to then combine for class performances.</p> <p>Musical Cycles: exploring cyclic patterns, focusing on traditional and modern music from West Africa.</p> <p>Musical Clichés: using musical clichés and conventions to compose music for blockbuster film trailers.</p> <p>Arranging Music: creating arrangements of a song.</p>
Year 8	<p>Musical Structures: an introduction to aspects of Western Classical structures.</p> <p>Hooks and Riffs: exploring riffs, hooks and grounds and the use of music technology.</p> <p>Music for Dance: examining how music is manipulated to accompany different kinds of dance.</p> <p>Variations: finding ways to develop music ideas.</p> <p>Jazz Improvisation: exploring improvisation.</p>
Year 9	<p>Music and Media: exploring how music is used. Creating compositions to a brief.</p> <p>Bhajan/qawwali: exploring Indian musical genres.</p> <p>Song: exploring popular songs and the use of music technology.</p> <p>"Let's Be in a Band": creating cover versions of songs and original compositions. Music and materials are chosen and developed by the pupils themselves.</p>

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The School has a network of approximately 200 computers. The main facility is a purpose built ICT Centre with two large classrooms and open access areas. There are further computer rooms in the Art/CDT block and in the Junior School. There are several clusters in other departments including Economics and the Library. All machines run Windows XP and several core applications including Microsoft Office and Adobe Photoshop.

RM EasyLink provides users with access to school network areas from home (or any other remote computer).

The web address is :

<https://folders.stchris.co.uk>

Users will be prompted for their St. Chris username and password. It is necessary to drag or copy files to the desktop of the target PC in order to use them. They can be saved onto the School network by dragging or copying them back.

Most subjects make extensive use of ICT and pupils acquire a wide range of skills in addition to those taught in ICT lessons.

Year 7	Presentation - Students create a short presentation about the school using PowerPoint to include a bar chart based on a questionnaire. Writing for an audience - Students study how magazines appeal to their target audiences. They then create a front cover for a magazine and some sample pages. Internet - Students learn how to use the internet effectively.
Year 8	Computer Aided Design - introduction to Pro Desktop and 3D modelling techniques
Year 9	Web design - Students design their own website using Dreamweaver. Computer Aided Design - more advanced Pro Desktop

PSHE and CITIZENSHIP

PSHE and Citizenship are taught in rotation by suitably qualified and experienced teachers.

The general approach is to encourage a relatively relaxed atmosphere of trust and to aim for all pupils to have up-to-date information on key issues, a clear understanding of fundamental concepts of risk and safety as well as the confidence to seek further explanation where necessary.

PSHE and Citizenship have a meaningful connection between real life issues and the academic curriculum.

Key guidance from National Curriculum documentation and DCSF circulars is adapted for implementation at St. Christopher.

Entitlement to sex and relationship education is in place. Pupils may withdraw from such lessons if they request, as per Government guidelines.

PSHE and Citizenship teaching makes use of a selection of techniques: group discussions, pair discussions, solo projects, media research (newspapers, TV, video and internet), poster and leaflet making, pupil-led seminars, dedicated programmes of work from commercial providers.

Year 7	<p>Puberty and the onset of adolescence: changing bodies and feelings. Healthy lifestyles: eating, sleeping, hygiene and exercise. Managing the transition from primary to secondary: the expectations of teachers, parents and the pupils themselves. Listening skills: exercises like the spaceship game to learn how to listen to each other with respect. Cooperation: parachute games. Bullying: using NSPCC and Kidscape materials. Learning how to study: handwriting, note-taking and keeping up to date. How to take part in the School Council: definition of terms and the importance of attending and having your say.</p>
Year 8	<p>Healthy lifestyle: sun care, diet, exercise, personal hygiene. Substances: legal and illegal. How to make friends and keep them. Bullying: empowering the bystander and feeling safe to blow the whistle. Definition of terms: Tourette's Syndrome, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, Depression, Anxiety, ADHD, OCD. Confidence and assertiveness. Faith communities: key moral issues. Media: global communications and advertising. There is also a module totalling 11 weeks on Environmental Education.</p>
Year 9	<p>Healthy lifestyle: physical, mental and emotional health. The A-Z of love and sex. Relationships: Make them and break them. Recycle to save your world. Studying to do your best: multiple intelligence testing and responses. Working with others. Bullying and who to talk to when things go wrong. Families: families are not all the same.</p>