

YEAR 9 CURRICULUM GUIDE

2023-24



PUTNEY
HIGH SCHOOL

GDST

ENGLISH

We begin the year by studying a 20th-century play, such as *An Inspector Calls* or *Pygmalion*, before moving on to explore a series of poems and poets from the First World War. In the Spring term, our focus shifts to the classic novel *Jane Eyre*, which lays the foundations for the Summer examination. Towards the end of the year, we will study a selection of poetry by former Poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy. We will also work on the presentation of arguments in written work and in class discussion, and you will be encouraged to extend your own reading during the year. We continue to address issues of spelling, punctuation and grammar in order to aid the effective communication of ideas.

Years 9 & 10 Book Club is on Wednesdays from 08.00–08.25am in the Library.

MATHEMATICS

In Year 9 we build on the foundations established in Years 7 and 8, applying mathematics to practical problems. The topics covered are:

Trigonometry and advanced work on Pythagoras' Theorem

Indices and standard form

Algebra:

Expanding Brackets

Factorisation

Solving quadratic equations

Simultaneous equations

Inequalities and formulae

Areas and volumes

Percentage change

Straight line graphs ($y=mx+c$)

Similar shapes

Data handling including frequency tables

More advanced Probability

Angles in polygons

In addition to the topics above, you will also learn about the history of mathematics and how much of it has been discovered by mathematicians from a variety of cultures and backgrounds. Pupils who wish to further develop their problem solving skills are encouraged to complete the weekly puzzle on 'Parallel' by Simon Singh. There will be the opportunity to take part in competitions, such as the UKMT Mathematics Challenge as well as team competitions. In the summer term, there will be the opportunity to explore Mathematics through investigative project work. Throughout the year, you will be encouraged to read more widely around the subject, and a reading list will be provided to enable you to do this.

SCIENCE

In Year 9, we begin the AQA National GCSE qualification that will lead to three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. This is a rigorous course that forms an excellent foundation in the Sciences for further study at A Level, and provides the scientific literacy necessary to thrive in a technological age. The AQA Science suite has recently been revised to reflect current advances in Science ranging from gene technology to environmental chemistry and astrophysics. Students will take separate examination papers at the end of Year 11 in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The AQA GCSE Science courses have a series of core practicals which must be completed throughout the course, although these will not count towards the final awarded grade.

Practical work will form an integral part of the teaching and assessment of the topics covered. There will be opportunities to develop your use of technology including science specific applications and data logging software on iPads and using the internet to deepen understanding of a range of subject areas.

Year 9s are welcome to attend our medical society on a Friday lunchtime or contribute essays towards our termly science magazine, Under the Microscope.

LANGUAGES

This year you have chosen to study three of the language subjects; Chinese (Mandarin), French, German, Spanish, Latin, Italian.

FRENCH

This year you will cover the topics of House and Home, Being a Teenager, Healthy Living, Jobs and Work Experience and Future Plans, as well as consolidating and developing your linguistic ability in relation to some of the Year 8 topics. After the Easter holiday, we start the GCSE French course. By the end of the year you should have a good knowledge of the present, future, perfect and imperfect tenses, which will enable you to express yourself with more sophistication and creativity in written and spoken French. You will have the chance to use digital resources to practise your listening and speaking skills and to research cultural topics.

GERMAN

In year 9, we embark on the GCSE course. This offers a great opportunity for you to experience GCSE German before you make your options for GCSE. We start with the topics of family and relationships, then your hometown, followed by school studies and, finally free time. We revisit and build upon the key grammar concepts we have been studying throughout years 7 and 8. You will also have the chance to visit a German Christmas Market, try lots of different food and buy your Christmas presents! You will play games which help you remember what you have learnt, and use the language lab and lots of fun apps like Quizlet, Blooket, Linguascope, Kahoot and Duolingo.

LANGUAGES *continued*

ITALIAN

This is the first year of Italian and is good preparation for GCSE. By the end of the year, you will be able to speak and write about greetings, food, nationalities, places in town, physical and personality descriptions, family and home, holiday preferences, daily routine and healthy life. The course will encompass listening, reading, writing and speaking activities. We will cover present, perfect, future tenses and some conditional. We will use digital resources such as [Linguascope](#), [languagesonline](#), [Blooket](#), [Kahoot](#), [Duolingo](#) and [Thisislanguage.com](#). We will learn songs and engage in fun role-plays. You will get the chance to go on a five-day Italian trip to the Amalfi coast in the October half-term. You can also attend a pizza workshop in an Italian restaurant in London and eat your own pizza!

SPANISH

This one year course will follow on from what you learnt in Years 7 and 8 and is preparation for GCSE. You will learn how to talk about your friends, the activities you do together and about places in your town. You will also be able to discuss TV programmes, films and holidays; the world of work. Finally, you will be able to talk about human rights, recycling, as well as going shopping and healthy living. There will be listening, reading, writing and speaking activities. The present tense will be revised and you will learn how to express yourself in the past and future as well. You will have further opportunities of singing songs, playing games and participating in role plays. There are plenty of fun apps to download on your iPad, such as [Quizlet](#)/[Vocab Battle](#)/[Showme/This is language.com/](#) [Babbel](#)/[Puppetpal](#)/[Duolingo](#)/[Linguascope](#), [Blooket](#), [the Language Gym](#) and [Caramba](#). There is also the option to take Beginners Spanish if you have not studied it in Year 7 and 8.

MANDARIN

This one-year course will build upon what you have learned in Year 7 and 8, preparing you for GCSE. We will delve deeper into daily conversations and expand your vocabulary related to clothing, daily routines, rooms in a house, places in town, shopping, and occupations. You will acquire more complex Mandarin sentence structures, grasp important grammar points, and familiarise yourself with past and future time frames. These skills will enable you to express yourself with greater sophistication and creativity in both written and spoken Mandarin. Additionally, we will continue to engage in enjoyable activities such as calligraphy and cultural research. Furthermore, there may be an opportunity for you to participate in an overseas trip during Year 10, which will enhance your understanding of the Chinese language and culture.

LATIN

In Year 9 we leave Pompeii and the Cambridge Latin Course behind, beginning more advanced language work using Taylor's Latin to GCSE. As well as developing the technical skills required to study the language at a higher level, we study the mythological background to Virgil's Aeneid, learning how he crafted an epic retelling of Rome's origins inspired by Homer's Iliad and Odyssey. We follow our hero Aeneas as he escapes the destruction of Troy by sea, encountering terrifying monsters and beginning a doomed love affair with the Carthaginian queen Dido before he reaches Italy. Classwork will involve a range of project work on mythology and history alongside language work: we will have covered around 40% of the language requirements of a Latin GCSE by the end of Year 9.

LANGUAGES *continued*

PYTHON

During this course, you will embark on an exploration of coding principles, with a strong emphasis on Python programming—a versatile, industry standard language with broad applications. As we progress through the Spring and Summer terms, you will delve into the domains of web development, app creation, or game design. This hands-on experience will empower you to transform your digital ideas into reality. Beyond coding, this course will hone your problem-solving abilities and sharpen your logical thinking. These invaluable skills will benefit your academic pursuits across the curriculum.

Upon completing this course, you will be prepared to excel in GCSE and A Level Computer Science study, where programming ability is key to examination success, although there is no requirement to have taken this Python course to take Computer Science at GCSE.

Continued practise will unlock a plethora of career prospects and entrepreneurial avenues in the dynamic tech industry.



ART

The level of technical skill in the subject is pushed further and is combined with a greater independence in the resolution of the projects. The first theme, 'Portraiture', examines this strong tradition in Art history through drawing, digital art and painting. The Fourth Plinth in Trafalgar Square forms the basis of the second project, in which highly imaginative, hypothetical designs are created to fill the plinth and sculptural models created. The students will then be Surreal artists for the summer term, learning about the influential Surrealists and using the movement's techniques and creative games to make surreal drawings, poetry, collages and digital art.

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

PRODUCT DESIGN

In Year 9 the Product Design course strengthens the practical skill set learnt in Year 8. You will be learning to work more collaboratively as a designer and asked to make connections within the wider context of solving a problem that benefits society and the environment. You will learn how to cast pewter and shape a copper bowl in the metalwork project whilst reflecting the theme of nature and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

TEXTILES

You will investigate and experiment with fabrics using decorative techniques. The course introduces the different markets within the fashion industry. Your A3 design portfolio will include information on the design influences for high fashion and the construction of fashion components. You will be expected to design and manufacture a functional and imaginative garment using methods that create fullness in fabrics.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

COMPUTING

Computing in schools has undergone rapid and substantial changes, adding a much larger technical element and challenge to the subject and looking at topics from both business and engineering perspectives. In Year 9, students gain fundamental knowledge of how computers operate, covering Boolean logic and number systems in relation to storage and processing of data. We explore hardware and software components and complete practical programming projects using Microbits, testing students' logical thinking and Python skills.

DESIGN THINKING

Design Thinking is a new and exciting subject which applies problem solving strategies to a range of practical projects. Students learn key principles; how to Empathise, Define, Ideate, Prototype and test solutions. We explore how humans interact with Machine learning and Artificial Intelligence e.g. how facial recognition systems are used in security and mobile systems. There is also an opportunity to register for the First Tech UK Robotics: a team competition to design, build and code a robot capable of driving autonomously.

DRAMA

Drama will rotate with music in half term slots. You will begin to learn the explorative strategies required for GCSE Drama using a variety of texts and issue based work. We begin with *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, whilst exploring the method of theatre practitioners Frantic Assembly. There will also be opportunities to devise short film pieces in the Spring Term. In the Summer we will combine with Music to put on a Junior version of a musical, where you will have the opportunity to perform on stage or develop your skills of technical theatre, working behind the scenes. You will have the chance to audition for the school musical at the end of the year and to create great devised work in the House Drama Clubs.

GEOGRAPHY

In Year 9 you will engage with the physical and human environment. The year begins with a unit on Development & Globalisation. We will move onto Rivers, followed by Conflict. In the Summer term we will complete fieldwork at Juniper Hall. Throughout the year we will develop and expand geographical skills, encourage debate and the presentation of ideas in original ways, which is excellent preparation for the GCSE course.

HISTORY

You will find that History in Year 9 differs from the outline approach used in Years 7 and 8. We will study selected aspects of European history in the 20th century in depth; these will include the Great War, the interwar period and the rise to power of Hitler. Our work on the Great War will be supported by a visit to a Commonwealth War cemetery and the Centre for Experimental Military Archaeology. Your work in Year 9 will be an excellent preparation for the IGCSE course in History.

MUSIC

On rotation with Drama, Music in Year 9 explores contemporary music throughout the course of the year, starting with remixes in the Autumn term where students transform the music of a modern-day artist using their theoretical music skills on Garageband. This is followed by film music where students learn the techniques of composing in a variety of moods, including how to create a mood suitable for a film of the 'thriller' and 'action' genre. In the Summer term, students rehearse and stage their Year 9 musical. Students take responsibility for all aspects of the musical production.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

You have two periods of PE which are divided into blocks of activities. Netball, lacrosse, volleyball, badminton, trampolining, handball, tennis, rounders, cricket and athletics continue as part of the curriculum so that you can develop further both your individual skills and team play. Rowing, football, dodgeball and basketball are introduced as new sports. You will also have sessions in strength and conditioning and Wimbledon ball training. Most activities taught in Year 9 are supported by extra-curricular clubs.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

The focus will be on philosophical, moral and social issues from a religious perspective. We will be exploring topics such as issues in science and religion, arguments for and against the existence of God; environmental responsibility; prejudice and discrimination and religious perspectives on these. It will provide a foundation for students opting to take the GCSE course and enable you all to develop your own values, beliefs and attitudes. We will also be studying Giants of Intellectual Change, a bespoke unit which provides the opportunity to learn about some of the great paradigm shifts of the modern world and who was behind them.

LEARNING ENRICHMENT

Learning enrichment caters to neurodiverse pupils to enhance the learning experience. It encompasses a wide range of strategies and activities aimed at fostering intellectual growth, critical thinking, creativity and is informed by evidence-based Science of Learning techniques. Learning enrichment goes beyond traditional curricular content and encourages learners to explore, inquire, and overcome their barriers to learning. It often involves personalised learning plans, adaptive teaching and learning strategies and opportunities for the pupils to chart their own learning journey by exploring what works best for them.

Learning enrichment delivers workshops, group sessions or 1:1 sessions on topics such as time management, study skills, organisational skills, memorisation techniques all aimed at recognising the needs of the students and making reasonable adjustments and accommodations in order to create a level playing field for all students that will enable them to realise their full potential.

PSHE

The Year 9 PSHE curriculum is designed to equip you with the skills to develop a healthy lifestyle. You will have lessons in nutrition and the importance of a well-rounded diet, the significance of sleep for physical and mental well-being and establishing good sleep habits, and finally you will be introduced to the importance of breast self-checking, and you will learn about the signs and symptoms of breast abnormalities. In the Relationships and Sex Education unit, you will explore topics such as healthy relationships, consent when alcohol is involved, and developing digital resilience, with the opportunity to attend several talks from expert guest speakers. In the Careers unit, you will explore various career paths and learn about different industries and professions. You will engage in self-reflection exercises to identify your interests, strengths, and values. Lastly, you will explore the concepts of diversity and inclusion, promoting a culture of respect and understanding.

LIBRARY

In Year 9, you will use the Library for research and reading. You may work in the Library as part of a class visit to research topics, or you may be set work which requires you to use the Library for your own independent learning. You have access to a wealth of information through the e-library, which you can access through Firefly. You will have progressed from the Y7 and Y8 Fiction section to reading your way through Young Adult Fiction. New titles are always being added. You are encouraged to reserve books you would like to read and make suggestions for new books through the library's online book request form, available through the Library's page on Firefly.

MARKING & ASSESSMENT

You will be involved in a variety of learning activities, including written exercises, tests and investigations; oral work and role-play; projects and reports; and practical work and performance. A reading homework is as important as a written task or learning for a test.

In Key Stage 3 (Years 7 to 9) we ensure time is given to understanding the importance of feedback and acting upon it, instead of focusing on the grade given. Teachers provide comment-only marking for most of the work they mark in Key Stage 3. Comment-only marking means the teachers provide written feedback, including advice for improvement, and do not provide a grade, as these can distract from reading and absorbing the feedback.

GRADE	EXPLANATION
E	Outstanding: working well above the expected level
1	Very good: working above the expected level
2	Good: working at the expected level
3	Inconsistent: some areas need further development to get to the expected level

Numerical marks are awarded for appropriate exercises, for instance vocabulary tests.