

# YEAR 8 CURRICULUM GUIDE

2024-25



**PUTNEY**  
HIGH SCHOOL

GDST

## ENGLISH

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You will produce extended pieces of writing of different kinds, including writing about the lives of others. There will also be speaking and listening tasks throughout the year. We will be consolidating work on spelling, punctuation and grammar so your ideas are always presented at their best in creative writing. We will continue to study a range of plays, poems and prose, including at least one play by Shakespeare, such as *The Merchant of Venice*, some autobiographical writing such as *My Family and Other Animals* and some modern authors.

You will be encouraged to extend your personal reading. There is a tailored booklist for Year 8, but ask at the Senior School Library for more advice. There is also a Years 7 & 8 Book Club, which is run by the Sixth Form on Mondays from 08.00–08.25am in the Library.

## MATHEMATICS

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The topics studied in Year 8 are:

Ratio and Proportion	Distance Time Graphs
Pythagoras' Theorem	Trigonometry
Scale drawing and bearings	Circles
Area and Volume	Polygons
Inequalities	Transformations
Straight Line Graphs	Correlation
Algebra including: Solving Equations Rearranging Formulae	

This will be in addition to reviewing and extending some of the work covered in Year 7 such as Fractions, Percentages, Estimation, and Constructions. The ideas become more useful in a practical sense and will be applied regularly to problem solving. There will be two pieces of homework per week, when you practise techniques learnt in class. There will be two tests in the autumn term, one in the spring term, and a summer examination based on the full year's work (two papers). You will be placed into sets for this subject to allow for a pace that is best suited to each pupil.

Every pupil will take the Junior Maths Challenge, a national competition for able students. This tests creativity within mathematical thinking and is tough but fun. In addition, pupils who wish to develop their problem solving skills are encouraged to complete the weekly puzzle on 'Parallel' by Simon Singh. Extension materials are also provided in lessons and there is a club for Years 7–9 that aims to explore topics outside of the syllabus.

## SCIENCE

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In Year 8, the three sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) are taught together by one teacher. Pupils build on their knowledge from Year 7, and establish a firm foundation for their future studies.

### BIOLOGY

You will study the processes that maintain ecosystems and the ways in which organisms adapt to their habitat. You will also learn about the inheritance of characteristics with an introduction to genetics.

### CHEMISTRY

You will investigate mixtures and different techniques to separate them. You will learn more about the Groups of the Periodic Table and the reactivity of different elements.

### PHYSICS

You will learn about the nature of electrical charge and investigate current and voltage in circuits. You will also learn about the effect of pressure, and how to describe the motion of objects.

All of these topics are supported by a number of experiments. As the year progresses, you will develop your practical skills and learn how to plan an investigation.

## LANGUAGES

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### FRENCH

French in Year 8 builds on the basics of grammar studied in Year 7 (regular verb conjugation, adjectival agreement etc) and develops through the study of new topics such as 'Lifestyle', 'Holidays', 'Sport and Leisure' and 'Daily Life in French-speaking Countries'. You will add to your knowledge of grammar by learning to use the past and future tenses, as well as a wide range of other grammar to enrich your work and make it more sophisticated. Alongside the in-class activities there are many useful resources and fun apps available to help you practise outside the lesson.\*

### GERMAN

This one-year course revises and builds on studies in Year 7 and will begin preparing you for GCSE. By the end of the year, you will be able to talk and write about holidays, your home, day-to-day life, and clothes and styles. You will start to use the past, present and future tenses and a variety of sentence structures. Your confidence in both the reading and listening tasks will increase over the year as you begin to employ more strategies. Alongside this, you will, of course, celebrate German Christmas and Easter and also play games which help you remember what you have learnt.\*

## LANGUAGES *continued*

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### **SPANISH**

This one-year course will follow on from what you studied in Year 7. You will learn how to talk about your holidays and the activities you do with your friends, including the type of music and clothes you like, going out and what to buy for a party. You will also be able to discuss food and order a meal. There will be listening, reading, writing and speaking activities. We will revise the present tense and you will learn how to express yourself in the past and future, as well as being able to give a range of opinions. You will have opportunities to sing songs, play games, watch video clips and participate in role plays.\*

\*There are plenty of fun apps to download on your iPad such as Puppet Pals, Duolingo, Quizlet, Kahoot, Linguascope and Languages online.

### **MANDARIN**

This one-year course will build upon what you have studied in Year 7. We will continue to work on daily conversations and expand your vocabulary related to school, weather, holiday experiences, personality and appearance. You will learn more complex Mandarin sentence structures, important grammar points, as well as the 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.

### **LATIN**

We start the Cambridge Latin Course using textbooks and the excellent Cambridge Latin Course website. You will develop your language skills during the course of the year through reading. The stories are set in Pompeii and follow the fortunes of Caecilius and his family and enslaved people in the months leading up to the eruption of Vesuvius in 79AD. As well as learning the Latin language, you will find out about daily life, Pompeian houses, gladiator shows, the baths and the political life of Pompeii. Classwork and homework will cover a variety of tasks, from written and oral language work and the learning of vocabulary to project work on Roman society.

## COMPUTER SCIENCE

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You will continue to build on the new skills learned during year 7. You will learn programming concepts using the high level programming language Python, which is used to run a range of apps and websites you use every day. We will build on your understanding of the binary number system which is fundamental to how computers work in executing arithmetic and logic operations, as well as understanding the different physical components which combine to form your computers.



## GEOGRAPHY

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You will develop your geographical skills and begin to understand more about the global community and physical processes that shape the land. You will study Coasts, Population, the Future of our Planet and the Middle East. We will visit the Sussex coast to carry out fieldwork and data collection on coastal processes. Lessons as varied and as lively as possible using activities and resources that will also stretch you academically.

## HISTORY

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You will explore the History of Ideas. We look at events from the Reformation to the Renaissance, Elizabeth I and the New World, The English Civil War to the French Revolution, as well as Slavery and the Abolitionist Movement. We also build on the skills acquired during Year 7, particularly essay writing and source analysis.

## RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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Following our study of Judaism in Year 7, the focus this year will be on Christianity, and alternative religious movements, whilst including relevant reference to other religions. We will study the life and teaching of Jesus, and beliefs and practices of the Christian Church. Many topics are philosophical in nature and encourage debate and evaluation, including evidence for the historical Jesus, the role of Jesus and his disciples, individuals as sources of authority; the status of the Bible particularly with reference to parables and miracles, Christian celebrations and festivals, and places of pilgrimage. Our investigation of alternative religious movements allows students to be informed about non mainstream denominations and sects, including Amish, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses and Hare Krishna.

## ART

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In Year 8 you will continue to record and evaluate your art journey in sketchbooks and develop your creativity through Making, Investigating, Knowledge and Evaluation (*known as MIKE assessment objectives used in Art at Putney*).

You will be introduced to more challenging techniques, processes and experimentation and a range of exciting artists to inspire and inform your developing knowledge and understanding. The first theme 'Everyday Objects' is based on the 'Still Life' and 'Pop Art' genres with emphasis on observational drawing skills, using a range of media and experimentation to make exciting digital artworks. You will learn about different artists and their contextual importance and produce your own creative mixed media composition. The second main project is 'Urban Landscapes.' You will be introduced to architecture and have the opportunity to learn further drawing and printing techniques, and there are strong contextual elements to inspire your knowledge and creative work. In the summer term you will conclude with designing a piece of Architecture and using sculpture materials to create your own model building.

## MUSIC

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Building on the foundations from Year 7, you will learn about the history of music, researching the roots of musical style and tracing its passage from medieval to modern times. The course covers the study of key pieces, instruments and composers with related listening and composition topics. Another composition focus is word-setting and all pupils will write their own songs, including Christmas carols in the autumn term. Throughout the year, sight-singing and instrumental skills are developed and put into practice. There are usually two class concerts and a summer concert.

## DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

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### TEXTILES

In Textiles you will continue to develop your skills in design and manufacture. We will design and make a tote bag with the focus being sustainability. We will learn a range of construction and decoration techniques to equip with the skills to create a more meaningful response. Ideally we will make a creative but functional product. You will study Textiles for half the year and swap in spring to Product Design (or vice versa).

### PRODUCT DESIGN

Product Design in Year 8 is structured to enable the students to develop a greater understanding of the responsibilities of a designer and manufacturer when working individually. The course enables students to work with a range of resistant materials including timber and plastics. Electronics is introduced enabling you to create an electronic speaker that can be played from an iPad. The project also allows you to establish your own graphic design style for your speaker.

## DRAMA

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You will continue to build on and develop the skills learned in Year 7. We begin by investigating the theme of 'Stolen Lives' – looking at different people and cultures affected by war. We then develop this theme to exploring The Windrush Generation and 'Noughts and Crosses' by Malorie Blackman. There is also a unit on Greek Theatre and Devising to develop your presentation and communication skills. There will be an opportunity to audition for main school productions at the end of the year as well as auditioning at the end of Year for the Shakespeare Schools Festival. There is also an opportunity to work with our Sixth Form students in the lunchtime House Drama Clubs. For those who are interested in private lessons we also have LAMDA lessons available.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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You will have two lessons of PE each week. A PE lesson at school and a games afternoon which will be off-site. Netball, lacrosse, gym, dance, handball, football, strength conditioning, volleyball and trampolining are taught in the autumn and spring terms. Tennis, athletics and cricket are taught in the summer term. All skills continue to be developed with the aim that you can enjoy activity and participate more effectively in our school teams and clubs.

## LEARNING ENRICHMENT

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Learning enrichment caters to neurodiverse pupils to enhance their 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

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The PSHE curriculum in Year 8 covers a range of important topics aimed at promoting your wellbeing and personal development. In the autumn term, you will learn about key themes in Relationships and Sex Education such as self-worth, gender stereotyping, healthy relationships, sex and contraception, and consent. The spring term will focus on healthy lifestyles where you will explore topics such as the impact of alcohol and drug misuse and seeking support, as well as the importance of immunisations. You will also have the opportunity to design your own leisure centre catering to a healthy community. The term will culminate with the Diversity and Inclusion unit where you will work on projects such as researching the impact of poverty and investigating possible solutions. Lastly, in the summer term, you will delve into the Careers unit, focusing on unfrog, careers for the future, and gender stereotyping in the workplace.

## LIBRARY

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The Library is open 07.30–17.00 for homework and reading in silence. You may use the Library as part of a class visit to research topics, or you may be set work which will require you to use the Library for your own independent learning. You will continue reading your way through the Y7 and Y8 Fiction and begin to ask permission from home to read books from the Young Adult section. You are encouraged to make suggestions for new books through the online book request form, available through the Library's page on Firefly.

## MARKING & ASSESSMENT

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Homework marked by the teacher in Year 8 will include feedback in the form of written comments. 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 unduly on just the grade given. Consequently, 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 students from reading and absorbing the feedback from staff.

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

Numerical marks are awarded for appropriate exercises, for instance vocabulary tests, and eventually, GCSE and A Level questions.