

Rainham Mark Grammar School

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Information for parents of pupils in

Year 8

Academic Year 2017 -2018

Introduction from the Headteacher, Mr S.Decker

May I offer our very best wishes to yourself and your child for the new academic year. This booklet brings together practical information as well as information about the curriculum content for pupils in year 8.

A welcome from your Head of Year

The second year at RMGS builds upon the work covered in Year 7 and prepares students for the increasing demands of Year 9 and beyond. As such, it is important that students meet expectations in terms of work both in and out of the classroom. If you have any concerns that your child is experiencing any problems in this respect, please get in touch by phone or by emailing the office with the subject – for the attention of Mr Patterson, so that we can offer additional support as required. It is hoped that our students are challenged, but not stressed so we would welcome a call if you are at all worried.

Mr Patterson, Head of Year 8

Pupils' Welfare

Your child's form tutor is responsible for overseeing their form's personal and academic welfare and is normally the first point of contact for parents. More complicated or weighty issues, are often dealt with by Mr Clarke, (Head of Year 8), jointly with the form tutor. If your child is absent from school you should ring the school on the absence number: **01634 308609**. If you are going to be away from home while your child is attending school please let us know in advance where your child will be staying and whom we should contact in emergency.

Similarly if your contact details change, please ensure that you inform us so that we can update our records.

In order to perform well all pupils require a balanced diet. We aim to provide this in our school canteen. If you who wish to join your child for lunch you are welcome to do so but please contact our Business Manager, Mrs Brighton, beforehand (01634 364151 or email mbrighton@rmgs.org.uk). Alternatively pupils may bring in a packed lunch. Guidelines on what to include are contained on our website. In the interests of all our students we would ask you not to include nuts in packed lunches.

Homework and Assessment

The homework timetable for Year 8 will be issued within the first full week of term and then can be found on the school website.

When work is marked staff will indicate what is correct and identify areas that can be improved, by adding appropriate comments.

Expectations at Rainham Mark Grammar School

In the pupil planner you will find a partnership agreement which lists the expectations of the parent, student and school in your child's education.

At RMGS we believe that good character is essential for a flourishing life and that to become a good learner pupils need to develop excellent learning habits. Our pupils should always show determination by working to the best of their ability in both class work and homework and by completing any missing work. They should take pride in their work. It is important that our students cooperate with others in order to deepen their understanding.

We expect our students to be intellectually curious, to work independently at home and to ask questions. Sometimes our pupils will not get the result they wanted and things won't go as planned, but we believe that mistakes are opportunities to reflect, improve and move forward.

With regard to class and homework you should expect that we will do our best to provide lessons and homework which will enable pupils to achieve high standards of learning and in return we expect our students to be inquisitive, serious-minded and reflective.

As a parent, we expect you to develop your student's learning and the following lists some tips which will help you to do this.

1. Provide a suitable work area. Your child should have somewhere quiet and free from clutter at home where they can carry out their home learning.
2. Regularly ask your child about what they have learnt that day and if they satisfied all of the learning objectives outlined to them by their teachers. If there have been any difficulties, discuss with your son or daughter how you can work together to complete the learning. This may be by using books at home or research on the internet.
3. Take an active interest in your child's home learning and ensure that they have a good homework routine and that you sign their planner regularly. Homework is best done on the night set and your child should be helped to structure their routine. Don't struggle for too long if home tasks are particularly challenging. If they have done the allotted time and are still struggling, write a note in the book or planner confirming the correct time was spent on the task.
4. If they are struggling with a certain subject during home learning refer to the 'how to help your child' section for the relevant subject in this booklet. Be prepared to invest a lot of time when your child first starts to work through the various home learning activities and determine the best way that your child makes progress from them.
5. If your child is absent it is vital that they catch up the missed learning. It is your child's responsibility to contact the appropriate teachers when they return from absence and find out what they have missed. In long periods of absence, contact the form tutor.

We do appreciate your support in this matter and know that encouragement from home really does help to maximise a student's performance.

Other important information

A reminder we expect pupils to bring the following equipment to school:

- A cartridge pen or biro (black or blue ink only)
- Geometry set
- 30cm ruler
- A Casio Scientific calculator
- Glue stick
- Scissors
- Small Modern Language Dictionary
- Descant recorder
- Backpack suitable for carrying A4 size books

Meetings and Reports

Parents Evening: 26th April 2018 and 2nd May 2018

All appointments take place between 4pm and 6pm (appointments need to be made before this date)

Target Report: 17th July 2017

Monitoring Reports: 13th December 2017 and 22nd March 2018

Examinations: 4th June until 8th June 2018

Reminder

If your child has a long term medical condition or develops one during their time at school, please collect a Health Care form from Mrs Else and return it promptly so that suitable provisions can be made.

Also, when your child is on medication, there is a form to complete and return. This can be found on the RMGS website.

Subject	Art
Course Descriptor	<p>Pupils will explore and develop ideas and themes in art and look at the work of a variety of artists. Themes will include Aboriginal art, Pop Art and Perspective. Artists looked at will include Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein and M C Escher.</p> <p>Emphasis will be placed on using a sketchbook to research, draw and design. Pupils will use a variety of 2D and 3D materials including paint, pastels, ink, card and mixed media.</p> <p>They will develop plans for, and make 2D and 3D images and objects, relating to the work of artists they have studied.</p>
How to progress	<p>Pupils make progress when they concentrate fully in class, taking small steps to tidy, refine and improve their drawings. Thorough research, finding a variety of pictures, or information, in books and the internet is helpful. In sketchbooks, each page and drawing should have written comments about the task and how the pupil will develop and improve the work. Asking questions to help understanding and clarifying meanings and art terms is important. Homework is related to class work tasks and at least half an hour should be spent on it. Pupils should take note of suggestions for improving work and act on them to improve their National Curriculum level.</p>
How to help your child	<p>Ask the student about their homework- what is the task and how will they do it? Ask them how they could improve on their homework, how does it fit in with their class work and is it as good as their class work.</p> <p>Look at art websites or books for further information, or visit an art gallery e.g. Tate Modern. Help them with organisation so that they bring their sketchbook, pens and pencils to lessons.</p>
Equipment	<p>Pupils should bring a pen, pencils, eraser and sharpener to art lessons. Coloured pencils and a glue stick are also useful.</p>

Subject	Computing
Course Descriptor	<p>The work completed in Year 7 provides the students with a basic understanding of the use of Computing. In Year 8 we extend this understanding and develop the students' ability to use a wider range of software. The pupils will continue to develop their use of Computing through a range of projects as outlined below.</p> <p>At first, the pupils will undertake an introduction to Year 8 Computing which will include a unit of work on appropriate use of computers and the Internet in school and the importance of online safety in everyday life. During the year the students develop an understanding of website development, the use of image manipulation tools, the design of databases, more advanced spreadsheet skills and basic programming skills through the sequencing of instructions in animation and game-making software. In the final term, the pupils extend their knowledge of writing VB code. There is far more emphasis on the students' ability to be creative and independent. There is also the opportunity to further these skills by joining the programming club.</p>
How to progress	<p>The units in Year 7 require the students to learn skills and apply those skills in given situations. In Year 8, the students should be following a similar process, but the key difference is that we expect the students to become more autonomous in their use of Computing. They will be given more ownership over the content they produce, using the given software. Students should take this opportunity to be creative and use the software to develop unique pieces of work, which really show their ability in the subject. The students will be invited to write programming code to solve problems. They should be making decisions and justifying those decisions based on good computing principles. Pupils should listen carefully to the instructions given and reflect on their work in every lesson. All class and homework should be completed to a high standard and pupils should work hard on the presentation of their work. The key test of this is the final outcome produced in each section. Students are expected to work on this more independently and to an extent structure their own learning and use of the software.</p>
How to help your child	<p>The school does not expect every student to have access to equipment at home. Students may need to complete some of their homework after school if they do not have the equipment they require. The best support you can provide is to regularly ask them about the work they are doing. Ask them to explain the software they are using and to show you their work in Moodle.</p>
Equipment	<p>Pupils should bring a pen, pencil and ruler to each Computing lesson. In addition all pupils should have a memory stick to save work ready for use at home.</p>

Subject	Design Technology
Course Descriptor	<p>In Year 8, Textiles is combined with Graphic Design and Electronics. Pupils learn how to use a sewing machine, use the Photoshop CAD program to embellish a photo of their own face and apply these skills to produce a 'Superhero' puppet. Soft circuit electronics are sewn in to enable LED's to light up as the 'hands' are touched together. They design the packaging for this product whilst investigating the information required by law to be printed on packaging when selling products to children.</p> <p>In Resistant Materials students make a working model of a vehicle that will move in a straight line. It is driven by a pulley system linked to an electric motor by an elastic band.</p> <p>Year 8 Cooking and Nutrition is all about transferable skills in practical work, home, health, food choices and the food industry. During year 8 students will have the opportunity to develop their cooking skills and knowledge within food technology. The focus of the course is to enable pupils to learn how to cook a range of simple but easy to adapt dishes safely and hygienically and to apply their knowledge of nutrition. They will be learning about healthy eating and how this can be accessed through their own cooking. In addition, they will consider the factors that affect food choice, food availability and the environment.</p>
How to progress	<p>Students will make progress through completing a number of design and make tasks. They will need to recognise the different needs of a variety of problems and generate and develop ideas while using a range of information sources. Students will make good progress if they build on knowledge and understanding gained throughout the course and work towards producing an accurate quality outcome from detailed plans for their product. Work is expected to be neat and well presented.</p> <p>Progress is monitored throughout and targets are set at the end of each unit of work. In Cooking they will learn to adapt and follow recipes using appropriate ingredients and equipment and to prepare and cook a range of more complex dishes. Students will be able to demonstrate a wider range of food preparation and cooking techniques and apply the principles of food safety and hygiene. They will develop their knowledge and understanding of nutrition and the environment to assist them with food choices. Students will be able to track their progress using the 'My learning journey booklet'.</p>
How to help your child	<p>Pupils must come prepared with a variety of coloured pencils and equipment such as pencil, pen, and a ruler. To become accomplished at any form of design drawing it is important to practice basic drawing techniques. Start a sketch book and draw everyday objects around the home two or three times a week. They should also be encouraged to look at examples of packaging and become familiar with the techniques used to produce these widely used but often readily discarded products. It is important that students come prepared for both theory and practical lessons. For practical cooking lessons measuring ingredients out themselves at home is a valuable skill for them to acquire and should be done as independently as possible. Ensure that ingredients are bought in as required including a suitable container to take the finished dish home in, and where possible involve students in the purchasing and choosing of ingredients. Pupils are given their recipe sheet or are told what recipe they need to research and possibly adapt during the single lesson before the double practical. Most of the recipes are found on Moodle but students will be told where to look.</p>

Subject	Drama
Course Descriptor	<p>Through further role-play, improvisation and scripted work, pupils will continue to develop the group skills necessary for meaningful drama to take place. They will have the opportunity to work in mixed groups as well as individually, developing the ability to negotiate and make decisions as part of a group and independently. Pupils will further examine how the use of space, movement and voice communicate meaning in drama and use these skills to create credible characterisations. An emphasis will be placed on the pupils understanding that the process of drama has its own worth and that performance is not always part of the activity. The units of work in Year 8 introduce new techniques such as hot-seating and also examine concepts in drama such as status. Some of the text stimuli used include <i>The Curious Incident of the Dog In the Night time</i> and <i>A Midsummer Nights Dream</i>. . Themes explored include loneliness and peer pressure. Pupils will also learn about different types of stage configuration in the modern theatre. Pupils will have the chance to participate in a weekly extra-curricular drama workshop in the studio and also audition for the annual production! These are ideal opportunities for pupils to further their interest in drama and develop their acting skills!</p>
How to progress	<p>The course is taught in units and at the end of each unit pupils will be assessed on both their preparation and performance work. Pupils will reflect regularly upon and respond constructively to their own work and that of others, with an awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses. Through this process of self-evaluation (verbal and written) and regular target setting with their teacher, pupils will be able to monitor their own progress in drama. Key techniques and drama based vocabulary will be revisited throughout the year, allowing pupils to make full use of all they have learnt and apply this successfully in their practical work. Attendance at extra-curricular drama activities will help to further enhance pupils' skills in the subject.</p>
How to help your child	<p>You can help your child by encouraging them to actively participate in the practical work they do in lessons and by asking them to regularly evaluate the quality of the drama work they produce.</p>

Subject	English
Course Descriptor	<p>Pupils will follow the Programme of Study outlined in the National Curriculum for England within the KS3 Framework and will be taught the relevant teaching objectives from the new specification with a focus on higher standards of literacy and language. Specifically, they will encounter five units of work designed to blend the teaching of spoken language, reading and writing. The units are based on the novels A Monster Calls and The Outsiders, an exploration of Media and Non-Fiction, a WWI Poetry Unit and a study of a Shakespeare play, A Midsummer Night's Dream.</p> <p>Pupils will be given opportunities to develop their spoken skills, by reflecting on what skills they have already acquired and identifying areas for improvement. They will use Standard English in both informal and formal situations and during role play. They will listen for specific purposes, paying sustained attention to others' talk. They will use their talk to question and develop thinking about complex issues and ideas. They will evaluate (and possibly collaborate in) the presentation of dramatic performances whilst considering their intonation, tone and volume.</p> <p>Pupils will read substantial texts and be expected to revise and refine their interpretations of subject matter, as well as the authors' style and technique. They will analyse the overall structure of a text to identify how key ideas are developed. For example they might follow patterns of language use. They will trace the development of themes or the authors' ideas and values in the texts they study. They will also be aware of the audience and context of writing in order to support their conclusions within comprehension.</p> <p>Pupils will craft and then re-read their own writing to anticipate the effect on their readers, revising the style and structure as well as the accuracy of their texts. They will develop their use of commentary and description in narrative writing. They will structure logical argumentative and persuasive writing, signposting their argument to help their readers. When analysing, they will consider varying viewpoints before presenting their own responses to a topic or text. They will be familiar with advanced punctuation such as dashes, brackets and semi-colons. Pupils will know and understand the differences between spoken and written language, including differences associated with formal and informal registers, and between Standard English and other varieties of English. They will use Standard English confidently in their own writing.</p>
How to progress	<p>Pupils will make progress in spoken language by approaching spoken tasks with confidence. They will plan their ideas to match the demands of different speaking contexts. They will experiment with techniques which will engage their listeners, for example using pauses for effect. They will take an active part in discussion tasks, showing understanding of ideas discussed and an increased sensitivity to others.</p> <p>Pupils will make progress in reading by identifying layers of meaning in the range of texts they have read. They will feel confident commenting on the significance and effect of features of texts they identify as important. They will give personal responses to literary texts, referring to aspects of language, structure and themes to justify their views.</p> <p>Pupils will make progress in writing by creating pieces which engage and sustain their reader's interest. They should use a range of varied sentence structures and begin to consciously use more ambitious vocabulary for effect. They will organise their writing into paragraphs and spell most words correctly, even those with irregular patterns. They will use a range of punctuation accurately to clarify meaning for their readers.</p>
How to help your child	<p>Please encourage your child to read independently and widely. Ideally, they should read for pleasure every day. Students should aim to complete both weekly homework tasks in detail and should spend the full time allocation on</p>

	<p>their work. Independent writing is always to be encouraged and students should take every opportunity to write creatively and with passion. Make use of the everyday opportunities to develop your child's communication skills by encouraging their spoken language and providing opportunities where they can read and write for pleasure.</p>
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Subject	Second year of French
Course Descriptor	<p>Pupils in their second year of learning French will continue to learn about France and French speaking countries, during their two weekly lessons. Working from Mission Français 2, they will reinforce vocabulary learnt last year in addition to covering topics such as weather, family life, free time, holidays, and food. The present and simple future tenses will be reinforced and the perfect and imperfect tenses (past tenses) will be introduced. Pupils will be expected to understand, speak and write in all three time frames in their summer examination.</p>
How to progress	<p>Pupils will be given the opportunity to practise all aspects of learning the language in lessons. They will begin by following work modelled by the teacher or in the textbook and will then progress to manipulating language and using it for themselves. Through class, group and paired practice, pupils will improve their accent, their accuracy and their ability to understand spoken and written forms of the language. Previously learnt grammar and vocabulary will be revisited throughout the year, allowing pupils to build up a good range of language skills. Regular learning homework's will be set to enable pupils to understand the grammar and master the new vocabulary. This will be vital for their future success in the language. Regular assessment will allow pupils to monitor their progress and understand what they need to do to improve.</p>
How to help your child	<p>You do not need to speak French to help your child! One of the two homeworks a week will usually involve learning vocabulary. You can help by testing your child on the vocabulary (s)he is learning and asking him/her to spell the words to you. For reading / writing tasks, you could direct him / her to the glossary or a dictionary for meanings or spellings. When (s)he begins to write longer paragraphs, his/her teacher will give a clear indication of the length expected. You could help by checking that the work is of the expected length and by asking your child to explain what (s)he has written to you.</p>
Equipment	<p>Pupils should bring their textbook (Mission Français 2), their class exercise book, their grammar book and a pen, pencil and ruler to each lesson. French – English dictionaries are available in language classrooms, but a dictionary at home would also help pupils to complete homework tasks. In addition, students can access wordreference.com, which is an excellent online dictionary.</p>

Subject	French beginning in Year 8
Course Descriptor	Pupils will start learning about France and French speaking countries, using the <i>Expo 1</i> textbook. They will develop skills in four areas – Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, as well as developing their understanding about life and culture in French speaking countries. During their three weekly lessons pupils will learn how to greet others and give personal information about themselves and their families. They will learn how to describe their pets, their school, their home town, their daily routine, their clothes, their eating habits and what they do in their free time. From time to time, pupils may have the opportunity to work with the French Language Assistant.
How to progress	Pupils will be given the opportunity to practise all aspects of learning the language in lessons. They will begin by following work modelled by the teacher or in the textbook and will then progress to manipulating language and using it for themselves. Through class, group and paired practice, pupils will improve their accent, their accuracy and their ability to understand spoken and written forms of the language. Previously learnt grammar and vocabulary will be revisited throughout the year, allowing pupils to build up a good range of language skills. Regular learning homework's will be set to enable pupils to understand the grammar and master the new vocabulary. This will be vital for their future success in the language. Regular assessment will allow pupils to monitor their progress and understand what they need to do to improve.
How to help your child	You do not need to speak French to help your child! Much early homework will involve learning vocabulary. You can help by testing your child on the vocabulary (s)he is learning and asking him/her to spell the words to you. If (s)he is doing reading or writing homework, then you could help by directing him / her to the glossary or a dictionary for meanings or spellings.
Equipment	Pupils should bring their textbook (<i>Expo 1</i>), their class exercise book, their grammar book and a pen, pencil and ruler to each lesson. French – English dictionaries are available in language classrooms, but a dictionary at home would also help pupils to complete homework tasks In addition, students can access wordreference.com , which is an excellent online dictionary.

Subject	Geography
Course Descriptor	<p>Students in Y8 will study the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The causes and effects of rapid urbanisation in India. This will begin with the basic physical features of India and the causes of the annual monsoon climate. Students will assess some of the myths surrounding the growth of slums, such as Dharavi, and look at the industrial links between India and the UK. • A quick revision of the water cycle before studying river landforms and processes in the upper, middle and lower courses. They will complete this unit with a study of the human and physical causes of floods, followed by a case study and methods of protecting ourselves and managing future floods. • Glaciation, continuing with the theme of physical geography. They will be looking at the landforms that have been created by ice and the processes involved. They will consider past climate change and the UK landscape 20,000 years ago, before linking this to modern landscapes. They will also think about the possible effects of climate change in the future. • Their local area and the unique landscape of the North and South Downs. The escarpment, dry valleys and bournes were all formed after the last Ice Age and have been affected by the geology (studied in year 7). Students are invited on a fieldwork day to Peene, near Folkestone, to develop their data collection and recording skills. This will be followed by an assessed piece of project work based on their results. • Population growth and China. They will look at the causes and effects of population change, including variations in the density of population within the UK and China, and look, in particular, at how China has coped with a rapidly expanding population. They will be encouraged to consider both sides of the controversial Chinese 'One Child Policy' and give a reasoned opinion about its success.
How to progress	<p>Students will continue the development of their knowledge of places around the World, which was started in year 7. The link between description and explanation will be reinforced to demonstrate an understanding of processes, landforms and human behaviour. Students will be encouraged to add more detail to their written work and to include annotation, rather than labels, to diagrams and sketches. Students will be expected to practise new geographical skills, such as data collection using quadrats and data presentation using choropleth maps and population pyramids. Their map skills will be revisited they will be asked to read and interpret their OS map section in the field.</p>
How to help your child	<p>Students should be encouraged to complete homework to a high standard and hand this in on time. Discussing topics with students should encourage them to consolidate their understanding and help them to give clear and concise explanations. Written work needs to be dated, titled and detailed. All sheets must be stuck into their exercise books in a logical order. The onus is on the student to find out about, and catch up with, any work missed by absence. It is useful for students to have a set of colouring pencils as well as glue and scissors in their pencil cases. It is also very helpful to continue to encourage students to watch quality documentaries and to keep up with the news through reading a paper, website or app. When travelling it would be helpful to involve students in route planning and navigation, using maps or GPS devices.</p>

Subject	German (second year)
Course Descriptor	Pupils will revisit and extend their knowledge of Germany and German speaking countries. They will continue to develop skills in four areas – Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, as well as developing a good understanding about life and culture in German speaking countries. Pupils will extend their knowledge of family life both in Germany and at home. Pupils will learn how to describe in detail their holidays. They will familiarise themselves with the necessary vocabulary and structures for a successful shopping trip, and they will develop a greater knowledge of food in Germany. In addition they will look at school life. From time to time pupils will have the opportunity to work with the German Language Assistant.
How to progress	Pupils will be given the opportunity to use their newly acquired language skills in every language class. Pupils will be able to follow work modelled in the textbook or by the teacher, and then pupils will be able to manipulate the language and use it themselves, extending their own answers. Extensive practice will allow pupils to improve their accent, their accuracy and their ability to understand both written and spoken language. Each new unit revisits previously learnt grammar and vocabulary and this allows pupils to gradually build up an extensive range of language skills. Understanding grammar and mastering new vocabulary is crucial for future success in the language. Regular assessment will allow pupils to monitor their progress and understand what they need to do to improve their skills.
How to help your child	Encourage your child to spend a few minutes every day revising the vocabulary and grammar that he/she has studied, and test him/her, making sure that he/she can spell the words, and explain the relevant grammar points. If you visit a German speaking country, encourage your child to use German at all times.
Equipment	To each class pupils should bring their textbook (Echo 2), their class exercise book, their grammar and vocabulary exercise book, and a pen, pencil and ruler. A glue stick and colouring pencils should also be brought. A “German – English” dictionary at home will help pupils complete homework tasks. In addition, students can access wordreference.com , which is an excellent online dictionary.

Subject	German (first year)
Course Descriptor	Pupils will start learning about Germany and German-speaking countries. They will develop skills in four areas – Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, as well as developing a good understanding about life and culture in German-speaking countries. Pupils will learn how to greet others and give personal information about themselves. This will develop into pupils being able to discuss their family and friends in detail. Pupils will learn how to describe their school and their daily routine, and they will learn how to describe their free time activities. Pupils will also learn how to describe their home and town. From time to time pupils may have the opportunity to work with the German Language Assistant.
How to progress	Pupils will be given the opportunity to use their newly acquired language skills in every language class. Pupils will be able to follow work modelled in the textbook or by the teacher, and then pupils will be able to manipulate the language and use it themselves, extending their own answers. Extensive practice will allow pupils to improve their accent, their accuracy and their ability to understand both written and spoken language. Each new unit revisits previously learnt grammar and vocabulary and this allows pupils to gradually build up an extensive range of language skills. Understanding grammar and mastering new vocabulary is crucial for future success in the language. Regular assessment will allow pupils to monitor their progress and understand what they need to do to improve their skills.
How to help your child	Encourage your child to spend a few minutes every day revising the vocabulary and grammar that he/she has studied, and test him/her, making sure that he/she can spell the words, and explain the relevant grammar points. If you visit a German speaking country, encourage your child to use German at all times.
Equipment	To each class pupils should bring their textbook (Echo Express 1), their class exercise book, their grammar and vocabulary exercise book, and a pen, pencil and ruler. A glue stick and colouring pencils should also be brought. A “German – English” dictionary at home will help pupils complete homework tasks. In addition, students can access wordreference.com , which is an excellent online dictionary.

Subject	History
Course Descriptor	<p>In Terms 1 and 2, pupils will study the Italian Renaissance. They shall look at historical developments in Italy during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, with particular emphasis on Florence, changes in painting during the period 1350-1550, in ways in which the Renaissance impacted upon other aspects of Italian culture and society.</p> <p>In Terms 3, 4 and 5, pupils will examine the Early Modern period by examining the social, political and religious changes that occurred during Henry VIII's Reformation. They will also study the English Civil War with particular emphasis on the career of Oliver Cromwell. Pupils will look at the religious changes taking place in England in the 16th and 17th century before considering the key controversies of his life, for example the decision to execute Charles I and evaluate his significance in the light of subsequent developments in Britain's political development.</p> <p>In Terms 5 and 6, pupils will study the major changes which took place in Britain from 1750-1900. These will include the agricultural and industrial revolutions, electoral reform and developments in transportation.</p>
How to progress	<p>To progress in History, pupils will need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe events that have taken place in the past • explain why these events occurred and comment upon their significance • describe different interpretations of an historical event, suggesting reasons why these have changed over time • make use of first- and second-hand sources when writing historical accounts, commenting on their reliability and usefulness <p>evaluate historical sources</p>
How to help your child	<p>Pupils should be encouraged to complete homework to a high standard, making sure that answers are fully explained with reference to the available sources, and to ensure it is handed in on time. Worksheets should be stuck into exercise books. Pupils should have a set of colouring pencils as well as glue in their pencil cases. It is also very helpful if pupils are encouraged to visit either the school or local libraries to borrow historically-related books, watch quality history documentaries on television and the internet, especially those related to the content of the course, and visit historical sites.</p>

Subject	Mathematics
Course Descriptor	<p>We are covering a five year GCSE Programme of Study in mathematics, starting in Year 7 and ending in Year 11. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 will follow the Foundation GCSE syllabus, moving to the Higher syllabus from Year 9 onwards. Pupils will continue their previous year's work on numbers to include number patterns with algebra. The number work will also include decimals, percentages, fractions and ratio and also applying the four rules of number to negative numbers. Pupils will also cover work on algebra including factorising and rearranging formulae, area and volume including circles and cylinders. They will also extend their work on angles to include polygons and parallel lines. Pupils will cover work on transformations, data handling, probability and graphs to include equations of lines and curves. Emphasis will be placed on problem solving, mental arithmetic skills, non-calculator and calculator methods as well as the use of other ICT resources. Pupils will additionally have the opportunity to participate in the Junior Mathematic Challenge in the Spring as well as take part in the junior team challenge if selected... A mathematical puzzle club is run each week in HZ. Clinics are held at lunchtime in the maths block where extra help can be given to understand work.</p>
How to progress	<p>Progress is made by clearly presenting solutions, showing all stages of working. Where examples are given in class these should be copied down accurately and used when answering questions. In Year 8 some solutions require more stages of calculation than Year 7, so setting out work clearly is important. Diagrams should be in pencil and drawing equipment should be used when appropriate. Formal methods will be shown for solving problems and these should be followed. New concepts are mastered by completing as many questions as possible and asking for help when unsure. All students have access to the course textbook on line as well as the MyMaths website and other resources.</p>
How to help your child	<p>Pupils should be encouraged to complete homework to a high standard and on time. Look at exercise books and offer advice on what and how to improve. Pupils should be provided with the correct equipment and encouraged to organize their time for revision for tests and exams. Help reinforce the learning that has taken place in school, including skills in mental arithmetic. Show enthusiasm for Mathematics, take an interest in what is being studied and stress its importance for future careers. Encourage the asking for help and the attending of lunchtime clinics, if necessary. Pupils should be encouraged to think for themselves and to have a sensible work-life balance.</p>
Equipment	<p>Pupils should bring to each Mathematics lesson, in addition to a pen and pencil, a ruler, protractor and pair of compasses. Pupils must also have a scientific calculator. All pupils will be issued with logins for the various online resources, and a homework book which can be kept at home. Pupils will also have an exercise book, which needs to be brought to every lesson.</p>
WEBSITES	<p>https://connect.collins.co.uk/school/defaultlogin.aspx (Online Text Book) http://www.mymaths.co.uk/ (My Maths Resource) https://www.mangahigh.com/en-gb/ (Online resources for Maths)</p>

Subject	Music
Course Descriptor	<p>Pupils will draw upon and extend their understanding of Music through the three key activities of performing, appraising and composing.</p> <p>Topics studied cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Scales ⇒ The Keyboard – a practical course teaching basic Keyboard skills ⇒ Improvisation in different musical traditions ⇒ Graphic Scores ⇒ Reggae ⇒ Year 8 Music and Drama festival <p>The Music Department runs a very large variety of extra-curricular clubs. Some are for students who are already experienced at playing an instrument, while others are aimed at those enjoying Music for the first time. Music clubs are an excellent way to foster musical development, confidence and team skills.</p> <p>Ensembles offered are: Vocal Group, Big Band, Composition & Theory surgeries, String Group, Brass Group, Junior and Senior Woodwind Groups, Guitar Club, Ukulele Club, Music Tech Club, 'Cello Choir, Acoustic Jam Session, and Jam Club.</p> <p>There are many opportunities for performance throughout the year, including the Christmas Concert, Carol Service and the School Spring Soirees.</p>
How to progress	<p>Pupils make most progress by continually using, reviewing and practicing skills learnt in class.</p> <p>Practical skills require focus and attention to detail, and some skills can be developed at home, for example listening to examples of the music learnt in class.</p> <p>Students are able to book practice rooms at lunchtime for either individual or group rehearsal.</p> <p>The opportunity to listen to music or see a live performance of music always helps to broaden pupils' range of experiences.</p> <p>Homework is set to consolidate skills learnt in class.</p>
Equipment	<p>Pupils should bring to each lesson their Music book, planner and writing equipment.</p> <p>Pupils who already play an instrument are encouraged to bring it in to class to use in composition and performance work.</p>
How to help your child	<p>Many students enjoy performing when they have a receptive audience. Ask your child to sing or play what they have been working on.</p> <p>Many students find reading and writing music challenging, but with regular use this becomes a lot easier. There are resources on Moodle to help develop these skills.</p> <p>Encourage your child to listen to a wide range of music and to talk about what they can hear.</p> <p>When class tests and exams are taken, help your child by reviewing and revising the work together.</p> <p>Encourage your child to attend an extra-curricular activity.</p> <p>Encourage your child to get involved with school musicals, concerts, and productions.</p>

Subject	Religious Education
Course Descriptor	<p>At the beginning of year 8 pupils will study Hinduism. This module seeks to enable pupils to further their appreciation of the rich diversity of the Hindu faith. They will consider the very different world view of the Eastern traditions exploring concepts such as Samsara, Karma and Moksha. Pupils will then consider the existence of a Supreme Being present in and through everything and the various ways this concept can be expressed through the myriad of deities and symbols. Pupils are encouraged to contemplate alternative lifestyles and expressions of faith openly and appreciatively especially those which are found expressed in our own local communities. They are asked to evaluate worship in the temple and at home, and how beliefs are acted upon by followers of Hinduism.</p> <p>They will then go on to study key Christian Beliefs including concepts such as the Trinity and Jesus' Resurrection. Pupils will be encouraged to explore their own beliefs and compare and contrast them with that of the Christian tradition. Particular emphasis will be on the meaning of the resurrection and the transformative importance of the Holy Spirit for Christians today. Pupils will do an independent learning project on different Christian denominations.</p> <p>The year concludes with an exploration of Humanism. The question will be raised as to whether it is possible to have morality without God. Pupils will also examine whether science and religion are in an intractable conflict or whether it is possible to be both a theist and accept a scientific explanation of the universe.</p>
How to progress	<p>In Year 8 pupils are exposed to both the Eastern world religions and the Christian tradition. Pupils are required to offer detailed <i>explanations</i> for why adherents of these religions hold the beliefs they do. To improve their knowledge and understanding pupils must begin to <i>evaluate</i> these ancient traditions, asking questions of relevance within today's contemporary society. Finally, skills of <i>compare and contrast</i> need to be developed asking questions such as <i>'How is the belief in the afterlife similar or different in Hinduism, Christianity and for myself?'</i></p>
How to help your child	<p>Religion deals with ultimate questions such as <i>'Who am I?'</i>, <i>'Where does the universe come from?'</i>, <i>'Does God exist?'</i>, <i>'Is there an afterlife?'</i> These questions have been asked by people throughout the centuries with varying answers coming from the realm of mythology, science, and religious texts. Encouraging an exploration and discussion of these questions, in light of religion, science and contemporary views, will benefit pupils.</p>

Subject	PSHE/Citizenship
Course Descriptor	<p>Throughout this year pupils will study a range of units devoted to their citizenship, health, relationship and careers education.</p> <p>In citizenship they will explore the question of '<i>what it means to be a good citizen?</i>' Pupils will investigate what Human Rights are and the United Nation Declaration of Human Rights asking questions of what basic rights every human being should have and issues of justice and fairness. They will have the opportunity to design and present a piece of research on this topic within groups. They will then explore what rights they have as children and then explore what it means to be part of a <i>global village</i> and how what we buy affects the lives of people across the world. Finally students will study a unit on discrimination exploring issues of gender, religion, race and disability and how people face these issues in our communities. As part of Sustainable Schools, students are given the opportunity to explore the grounds looking for wildlife, which they then research for a "show 'n' tell" project. The aim of this is to encourage students to consider wildlife habitats and ecosystems</p> <p>In PSHE pupils will consider relationship education exploring peer and parental relationships. This will lead onto careers education looking at equal opportunities and careers available to people today. For drugs education pupils will consider the problems of substance abuse and addictive behaviours and consider the issues surrounding offensive weapons. Towards the end of the year students begin a unit of sex education, with a focus on contraception.</p>
How to progress	<p>Due to the sensitive nature of the some of the topic matter, pupils need to show a maturity in how they approach these issues. They need to be aware of the different experience of other pupils and be sensitive to others in discussion.</p>
How to help your child	<p>Many of the issues explored this year are sensitive to pupils. To progress pupils may need the opportunity to discuss these issues further at home. Opportunities to discuss current examples as shown in the media will enable them to ground their discussions and empathise with other opinions.</p>

Subject	Physical Education
Course Descriptor	<p>In Year 8, pupils continue to study a similar range of activities as in Year 7. These activities include gymnastics, dance, invasion games, net games, striking games and athletics. Most pupils will select and combine their skills, techniques and ideas and apply them accurately and appropriately, consistently showing precision, control and fluency. When performing, they should draw on what they know about strategy, tactics and composition. They will analyse and comment on skills and techniques and how these are applied in their own and others' work. They will modify and refine skills and techniques to improve their own performance. They will explain how the body reacts during different types of exercise, and warm up and cool down in ways that suit the activity. They will explain why regular, safe exercise is good for their fitness and health.</p>
How to progress	<p>Pupils will select and combine skills, techniques and ideas. They will apply them in ways that suit the activity, with consistent precision, control and fluency. When planning their own and others' work, and carrying out their own work, they will draw on what they know about strategy, tactics and composition in response to changing circumstances, and what they know about their own and others' strengths and weaknesses. They will analyse and comment on how skills techniques and ideas have been used in their own and others' work, and on compositional and other aspects of performance and suggest ways to improve. They will explain how to prepare for, and recover from, the activities. They will explain how different types of exercise contribute to their fitness and health and describe how they might get involved in other types of activities and exercise.</p> <p>A number of extra-curricular opportunities exist for all pupils. They include a range of non-competitive activities to competitive team sports and all pupils are welcome to attend regardless of experience.</p>
How to help your child	<p>Ensure that your child arrives with the correct kit for each lesson. Continue to ensure that your child's kit is clearly named and replaced, when appropriate. Encourage your child to regularly attend our extensive extra-curricular program when possible.</p>

Subject	Science
Course Descriptor	<p>In Year 8 pupils continue to follow the 'Science Works' scheme and it is divided into a further 12 modules, each lasting approximately 3 weeks. Pupils are usually taught by one teacher in their mixed ability form groups.</p> <p>At key stage 3 Science offers opportunities for pupils to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • build on their scientific knowledge and understanding from key stage 2 and make connections between different areas of science; • use scientific ideas and models to explain phenomena and events; • understand a range of familiar applications of science; • think about the advantages and drawbacks of scientific and technological developments for the environment and in other contexts, considering the reasons for different opinions; • carry out investigations of different types, on their own and in groups, making use of reference sources and evaluating their work; • communicate what they did and its significance; • learn how scientists work and the importance of experimental evidence in supporting scientific ideas. <p>Each topic involves a mixture of practical lessons where the pupils perform experiments, and non-practical lessons where they write up their experiments, analyse and discuss their results and plan further work. The 12 year 8 modules are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Life Support 2 Keeping Healthy 3 People & Environment 4 Shaping Life 5 The Periodic Table 6 Using Elements 7 Metal Reactions 8 What's in Rocks? 9 Heating & Cooling 10 Light 11 Sound 12 Moving Around
How to progress	<p>The course of work has been designed so that the pupils build upon their KS2 and year 7 experiences and further develop their practical and analytical skills in preparation for KS3 and KS4 examinations later. In order to develop these skills, pupils need to observe experiments carefully and record results neatly and accurately so that they have the necessary data for analysis. The skills developed and extended in Year 8 will be vital in helping them to produce a successful and high-scoring piece of coursework for GCSE.</p>
How to help your child	<p>Science occurs in everyday experiences. Encourage your child to be more aware of the scientific experiences around them, to challenge them to question why. Encourage your child to watch scientific programmes and news items, and to take an active interest in the Science around them.</p> <p>Help your child to reflect on their classwork on a weekly basis, to consolidate their own understanding of new concepts and ideas.</p> <p>In Science, we believe one of the best ways to support your child is by supporting your child with their homework.</p> <p>HOW CAN PARENTS OR GUARDIANS HELP WITH HOMEWORK?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check that homework details are filled in clearly and regularly in the homework diary. There is space there for your regular signature. 2. Help your child organise his or her time to best advantage so that things are not all left to the last minute or even forgotten. 3. Try to make sure that there are suitable working conditions at home.

	<p>4. Take a positive and active interest in your child's work at home rather than just insisting that it is done.</p> <p>5. Let us know if there are problems with homework that you cannot resolve. Perhaps your child seems to be doing too much, or not enough, or is finding it too easy or too difficult. Contact the Science class teacher in the first instance, who will be glad to help.</p>
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Subject	Spanish (second year)
Course Descriptor	Pupils will revisit and extend their knowledge of Spain and Latin America. They will continue to develop skills in four areas – Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, as well as developing a good understanding about life and culture in Spanish speaking countries. Pupils will extend their knowledge of family life both in Spain and at home. Pupils will learn about food and drink, and shopping. Pupils will develop the ability to discuss what they did on their last holiday and talk about what they do, and what they have done, in their free time. Also, pupils will learn about the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. From time to time pupils will have the opportunity to work with the Spanish Language Assistant.
How to progress	Pupils will be given the opportunity to use their newly acquired language skills in every language class. Pupils will be able to follow work modelled in the textbook or by the teacher, and then pupils will be able to manipulate the language and use it themselves, extending their own answers. Extensive practice will allow pupils to improve their accent, their accuracy and their ability to understand both written and spoken language. Each new unit revisits previously learnt grammar and vocabulary and this allows pupils to gradually build up an extensive range of language skills. Understanding grammar and mastering new vocabulary is crucial for future success in the language. Regular assessment will allow pupils to monitor their progress and understand what they need to do to improve their skills.
How to help your child	Encourage your child to spend a few minutes every day revising the vocabulary and grammar that he/she has studied, and test him/her, making sure that he/she can spell the words, and explain the relevant grammar points. If you visit a Spanish speaking country, encourage your child to use Spanish at all times.
Equipment	To each class pupils should bring their textbook (Mira 2), their class exercise book, their grammar and vocabulary exercise book, and a pen, pencil and ruler. A glue stick and colouring pencils should also be brought. A “Spanish – English” dictionary at home will help pupils complete homework tasks. In addition, students can access wordreference.com , which is an excellent online dictionary.

Subject	Spanish (first year)
Course Descriptor	Pupils will start learning about Spain and Latin America. They will develop skills in four areas – Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, as well as developing a good understanding about life and culture in Spanish speaking countries. Pupils will learn how to greet others and give personal information about themselves, including detailed descriptions. Pupils will learn how to describe their school and daily routine, their home and town, and what they do in their free time. From time to time pupils will have the opportunity to work with the Spanish Language Assistant.
How to progress	Pupils will be given the opportunity to use their newly acquired language skills in every language class. Pupils will be able to follow work modelled in the textbook or by the teacher, and then pupils will be able to manipulate the language and use it themselves, extending their own answers. Extensive practice will allow pupils to improve their accent, their accuracy and their ability to understand both written and spoken language. Each new unit revisits previously learnt grammar and vocabulary and this allows pupils to gradually build up an extensive range of language skills. Understanding grammar and mastering new vocabulary is crucial for future success in the language. Regular assessment will allow pupils to monitor their progress and understand what they need to do to improve their skills.
How to help your child	Encourage your child to spend a few minutes every day revising the vocabulary and grammar that he/she has studied, and test him/her, making sure that he/she can spell the words, and explain the relevant grammar points. If you visit a Spanish speaking country, encourage your child to use Spanish at all times.
Equipment	To each class pupils should bring their textbook (Mira I Express), their class exercise book, their grammar and vocabulary exercise book, and a pen, pencil and ruler. A glue stick and colouring pencils should also be brought. A “Spanish – English” dictionary at home will help pupils complete homework tasks. In addition, students can access wordreference.com , which is an excellent online dictionary.

