

Curriculum Notes Year 8



A very warm welcome to Cranmore Year 8. As Head of Year, it is my pleasure to provide you with the following notes that should give you a comprehensive overview of what awaits your sons in their academic pursuits this year.

I hope that these notes help demonstrate the breadth and depth of study, as well as being a useful reference point during the course of the year. Of course, alongside their intellectual development, we will be looking at developing well-rounded young men, through a broad academic programme of study with additional opportunities for enrichment in which to develop and enhance life skills of communication, problem solving, team working, leadership and resilience.

Should you have any questions, the Year Team is made up of me, Mrs Davies and Mrs Mauvis. Please do not to hesitate to contact us should the need arise.

William Lamport

Head of Year 8

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English

Head of Department: Mr Marcus Chapman

In Year 8, we broaden the range of study and activity in English as we continue progress towards GCSE. The teaching groups will be setted.

Our overarching theme this year is Power and Control and Enquiry Questions such as '*What makes a villain?*' will frame the learning. Diversity and challenge of texts is at the heart of the curriculum and pupils will be encouraged to conduct independent research of literary contexts, historical periods and literary genres to enhance their learning.

Programme of study:

- The Mystery Genre - a selection of texts by Dahl, Conan Doyle and others
- Narrative and Spoken Word Poetry - from the 18th century to the present day, including Benjamin Zephaniah, Akala and Maya Angelou
- Introduction to the Gothic Genre - texts such as Frankenstein the play, the poetry of Edgar Allan Poe, Christina Rossetti and classic Gothic shorts
- Reading the News - exploring news values, bias and opinion writing
- A Shakespearean Comedy (Much Ado About Nothing)

Language study will be interwoven during each unit and will emphasise clear planning; accuracy of spelling and punctuation; proofreading; developing vocabulary and improving style. A range of writing purposes will be explored, including persuasive, descriptive, explanatory and review. Pupils will write for different forms, varying register and voice as appropriate.

Analytical and evaluative writing becomes a more central part of learning this year and pupils will be expected to respond analytically to unseen extracts, textual passages and also write whole texts essays about characters or themes, including comparative pieces.

Speaking and listening skills will be developed though class discussion; hot-seating; book presentations; debating and drama performance.

There continues to be an expectation that all pupils will read widely throughout the course and will stretch themselves to tackle texts they find more challenging. They should talk about their reading with an adult at least once each week in order to discuss and extend their comprehension.

Pupils will be assessed formatively in class every lesson via questioning, teaching marking, self and peer assessment. There is a cohort assessment each half term to monitor pupils' progress against our Mastery Assessment Objectives and pupils will have opportunities to review and correct these. There will be a further assessment at a slightly higher level in the week before the May half term.

Each week there will be two homeworks which should take approximately 25-30 minutes each. One may be a reading homework that relates to a library-based reading project. Pupils will have a weekly 30 minute library lesson where they are able to select books, discuss their reading, complete research tasks and survey the reading list.

Mathematics

Head of Department: Mr Christopher Savvides

Mathematics is fundamental to many areas of our lives, and it is therefore crucial that we equip our children with the necessary skills to become confident, logical and resilient problem solvers as they embark on their journey to adulthood.

We believe that Mathematics should be engaging, challenging, practical and interactive. We make the most of Mathematics challenges and team competitions to encourage participation and ensure our children are enthusiastic and motivated mathematicians. We endeavour to utilise various methods and techniques across the curriculum and instil a love for mathematics into each pupil.

In Year 8, all students follow the same scheme of work for Mathematics, which is based on an enhanced National Curriculum, with a focus on problem solving, mastery and fluency.

Year 8: Programme of Study

Number: Using a calculator and rounding, indices, properties of number, all operations involving fractions, decimals, percentages and ratios.

Algebra: Sequences, expanding and factorising expressions, rearranging formulae, linear and simultaneous equations, straight line graphs, curved graphs and conversion graphs.

Shape, space and measure: Pythagoras' theorem, Reviewing angle rules, construction of triangles, angles in polygons, bearings, map scales, 3d shapes, area of shapes including circles, volumes of prisms and cylinders, transformations.

Data Handling: Averages and range including frequency tables, scatter graphs, stem and leaf diagrams.

Resources

Pupils use the Essential Maths series of textbooks published by Elmwood Press. We have carefully mapped our curriculum on <https://www.drfrostmaths.com> so that pupils have access to a vast library of appropriate problems for consolidation. Pupils and teachers also use <https://www.mathspad.co.uk/> as an excellent resource to further develop understanding of topics. Our [VLE pages](#) contain lots of information, links and resources to support your son with their learning and progress.

There are a wide range of hugely impactful interactive resources available to us online and the quality of these resources have increased hugely over recent years. As a department we are constantly sharing what works best and we keep on top of innovative resources and approaches to teaching Mathematics.

In addition to our classroom provision, pupils also have access to our drop-in support session, MathsLink, which takes place on a Monday and Friday lunchtime, and our Maths Challenge club, which takes place on a Thursday after school.

Science

Head of Department: Mr Stuart Minikin

At Cranmore our aim is to develop scientists with a rigorous understanding of the subject, an enthusiasm for learning and the confidence to question, evaluate and articulate their ideas. We encourage all students to develop a love for science by balancing theory with practical work and place a high value on developing the technical and analytical skills needed to investigate experimentally. We create a safe environment in which the students feel comfortable exploring their understanding and where we can add to both their knowledge and skills. We focus on developing a meticulous approach to practical investigations which are used as often as possible, to support the learning of theory. Our students enjoy science and develop techniques that will be useful to them for the rest of their lives.

YEAR 8: Programme of Study

Biology

- Photosynthesis and the Carbon Cycle
- Ecosystems and Classification
- Leaf Adaptation and Plant Transport Systems
- The Musculo Skeletal System

Chemistry

- Physical and Chemical Changes
- The Reactivity Series and Metal Extraction
- Acids, Bases and Neutralisation
- Climate and the Atmosphere

Physics

- Forces, Balanced and Unbalanced
- Motion, Speed, Distance and Time
- Density of Matter, Regular and Irregular
- Pressure from Perpendicular Forces

Resources & Information

Science is taught by specialist teachers and pupils will be assessed regularly, usually at the end of each topic, to support their progress. The Science Department enjoys the use of large laboratories and two prep rooms which are well provisioned for the learning of the science curriculum. Our Science Technicians ensure the preparation of the equipment for practical activities and support the teaching staff on a daily basis. Additional resources, together with details of homework, can be found on the VLE.

Languages

Head of Department: Miss Christine Ebdy

Our philosophy as a department is to inspire and motivate the pupils by giving them a positive, lively and enjoyable experience of foreign language learning. We especially strive to acknowledge the individuality of every pupil with his unique talents. We aim to help every child to being confident on their journey of linguistic discovery, improving their own skills and developing them steadily to their full potential. For this to be achieved, our pupils must naturally have a positive attitude to the subject and we see it as part of our task to foster such an attitude.

Resources & Information

For all 3 language subjects, the pupils will have weekly vocabulary tests and end of topic assessments throughout the year and an end of year exam in May, assessing productive skills.

The pupils will have access to a variety of resources and material such as: www.pearsonactivelearn.com, www.languagesonline.com, www.conjuguemos.com and www.quizlet.com.

Homework is once a week for each language and consists of vocabulary learning and interactive tasks to reinforce what has been taught in the lessons. From time to time, they will also complete writing tasks and fun cultural activities.

French

In French, pupils will study Dynamo 2 Rouge modules 3-5. They will learn the perfect tense and revise the immediate future and present regular and irregular tenses across a variety of topics. Pupils will continue to develop their reading, listening, speaking, phonics, writing and translation skills.

Year 8: Programme of Study

Topics & Vocabulary	Grammar
Television programmes	Adjectives and adjectival agreement
Digital technology	Questions: comment, qui, où, quand, que, pourquoi Time phrases Present tense: regular
Going to the cinema	Immediate future tense
Leisure activities	Negatives Possessive adjectives: ma, mon, mes Present tense: irregular
Shopping	Perfect tense with avoir and être Imperfect tense
Describing your weekend	Perfect, immediate future and present tense
Countries and weather	Present and imperfect tense
Where you live	Pouvoir + infinitive
Helping at home	Devoir + infinitive Je pense que, pour moi, à mon avis
Daily routine	Present tense: reflexive verbs Time
Moving house	Irregular adjectives: beau, nouveau and vieux
Francophone countries: extended reading and listening	Perfect, immediate future and present tense
Sports	Jouer à and faire de Revision of present and perfect tenses
Opinions	Comparatives: plus...que and moins...que Revision of adjectives
Directions Places in town	Imperative A + definite article + noun

Spanish

In Spanish, the pupils will learn the following topics and grammar points accompanied by Viva 2 textbook. Spanish will be learnt using a range of materials, interactive games, songs, online activities, as well as reading comprehension, listening, speaking and writing activities. We encourage the use of these resources at home and in school. They will have access to www.pearsonactivelearn.com, www.linguascope.com, www.quizlet.com, www.conjuguemos.com and www.languagesonline.org.

Year 8: Programme of Study

Topics & Vocabulary	Grammar
Module 1 A past holiday Saying what you did on holiday Describing the last day on holiday Saying what your holiday was like	Preterite of ir (to go) Preterite of regular -ar verbs Preterite of -er and -ir verbs Preterite of ser
Module 2 What you use your phone for What type of music you like Giving a range of opinions Talking about TV What you did yesterday Understanding a TV guide	Revising the present tense Comparatives Present and preterite together
Module 3 Saying what food you like Using a wider range of opinions Describing mealtimes Ordering a meal Discussing what to buy for a party Giving an account of a party	Negatives Usted / ustedes The near future Using three tenses together

Latin

Latin will be learnt using Cambridge Latin Course Book 1 and online activities, as well as reading comprehension, and translation activities (Stages 6-12).

Year 8: Programme of Study

Grammar:

- Nouns – accusative case plural of 3 declensions.
- Introduction of dative case of nouns and of pronouns *ego* and *tu*.
- Verbs: conjugation of the verb *esse* in all persons.
- Verbs: Imperfect and Perfect Tenses: all persons – revision and introduction of perfect stems, irregular stems.
- Adjectives: comparative and superlative, and agreement in gender, case and number with the nouns they describe.
- Questions.
- Syntax: sentences without nominative.

Vocabulary:

- Around 15-20 words per Stage which are also on the GCSE vocabulary list.
- Derivation work to make connections between Latin vocabulary and English, French and Spanish vocabulary.

Culture:

- Roman history is combined with the language throughout, and the influence of the Romans, and similarities and differences between ancient and modern society explored. Topics are slavery, Roman entertainment, gladiators, the Roman baths, education, the destruction of Pompeii.

History

Head of Department: Mr Rhys Cross

In Year 8 we continue with the Tudors and assess Elizabeth's methods in maintaining religious tolerance. We move swiftly to analyse the English Civil War and how its consequences underpinned the trajectory of the future relationship between the monarchy and parliament. The remainder of the year is dedicated to Britain in the age of empire and exploration, with a particular focus on the slave trade. To conclude, the students will assess the origins and impact of the industrial and French revolution on the modern world.

Year 8: Programme of Study

- Elizabethan England in the age of religious struggle
- The Stuarts and the English Civil War
- Early Exploration and Empire
- The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade
- The Industrial Revolution
- The French Revolution

Resources and Information

The emphasis will be very much on the dual disciplines of essay writing and source analysis skills, as these are the skills required to succeed at GCSE History.

The students will study the same period of History covered for a portion of their GCSE course; however, Year 8 gives a detailed introduction to a broad range of topics such and therefore provides the student will a foundational understanding of potential GCSE topics. Whereas at GCSE level the student must undertake a 'British Depth Study', for example, 'Early Elizabethan England 1558-1588', and investigate the topic in far greater depth. Therefore, this academic year enables them to begin their GCSE course (in 2026) with a sound grasp of the topic and concepts involved. The same analytical skills learnt at Key Stage 3 History apply to the historical sources tackled at GCSE level, but the calibre of response will be expected to be higher.

The History Department is fortunate to be well provisioned. Relevant digital clips, up to date textbooks, bespoke PowerPoints and various worksheets will all be utilised in the learning process, as well as personal devices. Information pertaining to many of the topics covered can be found on the VLE.

Geography

Head of Department: Miss Maisie Bayley

In Year 8 the aim is to encourage pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of both physical process and human activities by using a range of geographical skills through which to develop their geographical understanding of the planet. The geographical themes for the year focus on the global scale. International human activity and the natural landscapes of the world will be analysed whilst further building decision making skills and data analysis. The areas of study this year are as follows:

- **Tectonic Hazards**
 - Tectonic plate movement
 - Earthquakes, Volcanoes and Tsunamis
 - Managing Hazards
- **Global Development**
 - Development indicators
 - Comparing HICs, LICs and NEEs
 - The Sustainable Development Goals
- **The Living World**
 - Local Ecosystems
 - Global Biomes
 - Rainforests vs Hot Deserts
- **Global Challenges & Solutions**
 - Plastic pollution and ocean life
 - Climate change
 - Mass tourism, Ecotourism and wilderness areas
 - Conflict zones
- **World Cities**
 - Megacities
 - Urbanisation
 - Jakarta – the sinking megacity

Resources and Information

Pupils will be expected to be able to apply the theory of the topics studied and by using their understanding and knowledge of the subject, develop logical answers, using reasoned evidence through which to make their point. Examinations will take place in January and May with regular assessment grades given throughout the course of the year.

The VLE along with their associated textbooks provide a good range of resources from which to develop their understanding. It is important to stay up to date with current events in the media to give real world examples of topics learnt throughout the year.

Computing

Head of Department: Mr Ahmed Afana

At Cranmore, we aim to provide a high-quality digital education that equips pupils to understand and change the world through computational thinking and provides a sense of empowerment and excitement in developing and using digital technology. With a 1:1 device program in place, we will also be enabling creativity and research opportunities in other subjects, always with a mind on using technology wisely and safely.

ICT and Computing includes these interrelated elements:

- **Computer Science (CS)** is the discipline that explains how digital systems work, how they are designed and programmed, and the fundamental principles of information and computation.
- **Information Technology (IT)** covers the purposeful creation and application of digital systems to communicate, transfer data and process information collaboratively with others.
- **Digital Literacy (DL)** is the ability to access, use, and express oneself using digital technology responsibly and safely, including a critical understanding of technology's impact on the individual and society.

Year 8 will cover the following topics this year

- CS: Computer Hardware and Physical robotics
- CS: Networks: from home to the world wide web
- IT: Web Design for a Business
- CS: Algorithmic Thinking and Problem solving – Flowol
- IT: Game Development – Construct 3
- CS: Programming Techniques with Python – Phase 1

Resources and information:

The pupils will be using various platforms throughout the year. As part of physical computing approach, pupils will also be using mini controllers called BBC Micro: bit, and BBC Micro: Bit website. They will also be using MS 365 Teams and educake to complete homework and revise for assessments.

Pupils will be recording their learning on OneNote and will be provided with a knowledge organiser for each unit, containing all main facts, keywords, and a guide on how to use learning platforms.

Pupils will be assessed throughout and at the end of each unit.

Design and Technology

Head of Department: Mr Chris McGhee

Overview

In Design and Technology, pupils will develop their design and making skills by undertaking practical and theoretical assignments through classwork tasks. Pupils will learn about the design process, properties of a variety of materials and will develop skills using computer aided design software to manufacture several functional prototypes.

Through the Year 8 Design and Technology programme of study, pupils are encouraged to be more independent with design ideas and push the boundaries of creativity with innovative solutions.

Year 8: Programme of Study

- Health and Safety.
- Technical sketching and rendering techniques.
- CAD/CAM.
- Exploration of wood-working through different projects.
- Introduction to key design movements, linking to the GCSE qualification.

It is a very exciting time for the Design and Technology department with the construction of the new, purpose-built Science and Technology building. As the department continues to grow, the pupils can look forward to experimenting with new machines and processes which will ultimately enrich their Design and Technology experience.

Drama

Head of Department: Mr Thomas Penfold

To continue to develop our students' understanding of Drama and performance, year 8 is full of exciting and challenging topics. The focus this year is to expose our young people to a variety of performance styles, studying their importance as societal tools as well as their role in the development of theatre throughout the ages. Drama this year will open students' experiences to alternate methods of creating meaning for an audience, and how, through specific performance techniques, we can create meaningful and poignant Drama in unconventional ways.

The curriculum this year is tailored to the understanding at GCSE level and beyond, looking at important Drama practitioners Bertolt Brecht, Augusto Boal and Eugene Ionesco and exploring their styles practically as well as theoretically.

Year 8 Programme of Study

- **Melodrama** – An exploration of the skills of melodrama. Focusing on the skills of exaggeration, stock characters, monologue and dramatic tension, students will explore the true story of Maria Marten and the red barn.
- **Story Telling: Narration, Narrative Structure and Building Engaging Story** – Starting to explore the key components of story telling through the way a story is structured and how narration can be used effectively.
- **Augusto Boal: Theatre in Education** – An exploration of theatre as a tool to teach. Students will use the techniques of Boal to create performances designed to inform and guide others.
- **Verbatim Theatre: World War Two** – A study of the events of World War Two through the use of Verbatim Theatre, the study and research of first hand accounts, documents and diaries to create poignant performance.
- **Practitioner Study: Bertolt Brecht's Epic Theatre** – A study of non-naturalistic Drama and the importance of this in theatre history. Students will learn about how non-naturalistic Drama came to be as well as practice several of Brecht's Verfremdungseffekt techniques.
- **Practitioner Study: Ionesco & Beckett's Theatre of the Absurd** – Developing students' understanding of non-naturalistic Drama and how absurdism can be used to create effective theatre.

Further Information

Private lessons with the opportunity to take LAMDA exams are available and all pupils are invited to participate in the Senior production. Theatre visits will be arranged when appropriate performances are available.

MUSIC

Head of Department: Mr Richard Harris

General Overview

We aim to develop a 'love of music' at Cranmore. With your support, we will inspire the pupils to greater musical heights and encourage them to participate in one or more of the many instrumental and choral groups available to them.

Curriculum Overview

Pupils in this year group will enjoy a one hour lesson each week taught by Mr Harris.

Topics include:

- Multitrack recording at the keyboard and creating original arrangements based on traditional Christmas melodies
- Carol Service Preparation
- Composition – 'Fanfare' using MuseScore and 'Haunted House' using a keyboard
- Project - Original Song v Cover Version comparison

Performing opportunities for Year 8 musicians are plentiful here at Cranmore: Wednesday assembly, Carol Service, Battle of the Bands, Pupil Concerts, Young Musician of the Year Competition, and Spring Soiree. The more capable musicians will often perform during Mass.

Pupils in this year group are encouraged to take part in at least one extracurricular musical activity.

Resources & Information

During these practical lessons, pupils will often use the extensive range of classroom instruments and the Yamaha keyboards.

Pupils are encouraged to download the free software **Musescore 4** to complete their composition work. Assessment in this subject is based on GCSE grading, is ongoing throughout the year and is based on their success in practical lessons. A pupil's instrumental and / or vocal ability / contribution will also be taken into account.

Religious Education

Head of Department: Mr Gareth Phillips

In this year, pupils will consider some of the biblical themes associated with creation and covenant, and the interwoven aspects of prophecy and promise as they explore and journey along some of the storylines of the bible. Pupils will then explore some elements of the life of Jesus through a survey of his life in a unit called Gallilee to Jerusalem.

The spring term will build further into existential questions that lie at the heart of the human condition, in biblical themes looking at its historical, scriptural, and faith-based implications.

The final term of the year will reflect upon the meaning of suffering and the meaning of death within the Christian context (following the new Religious Studies Directory for England and Wales), building upon the existential reasonings and scriptural foundation built throughout the course of the year.

Year 8 will cover the following topics this year:

Autumn term

Creation and Covenant – Exploring the ideas of biblical commitment, freedom and the relationship between rules and our conscience.

Prophecy and Promise – We will survey the storylines that weave throughout the biblical narrative, as we explore the nature of prophecy in the Old Testament and how Jesus was the fulfilment of the messianic hope for Israel and the world as God incarnate.

Spring term

Gallilee to Jerusalem – The major theme of the Kingdom of God will be explored through the teachings of Jesus, and the call to live authentically and to embrace love, charity and justice. We will also look at the philosophical aspects and arguments in critique and support of miracles.

Desert to Garden – In this unit pupils will grapple with the concept of suffering and how we may respond to the purpose of suffering. In trying to make sense of suffering pupils will go beyond the why? questions of evil and suffering and learn to transition their posture to the 'What now?' elements of suffering. This is a philosophical approach which aims to build insight and resilience in coping within a broken world.

Summer term

To the ends of the earth – In this unit pupils will explore the ideas of death and resurrection into the afterlife. Did Jesus rise from the dead? and the evidence for this. Is there an afterlife? What do other religions believe about life after death?

Philosophy – we will end the year by looking at how to engage in dialogue and debate, how to agree and disagree well in life. Aristotle wrote, "It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it." Being able to look at and evaluate different values without necessarily adopting them is perhaps the central skill required in changing one's own

life in a meaningful way. We will develop this skill through looking at how to argue well and teach skills in spotting fallacies in argument e.g the Straw man fallacy.

Resources & Information

Within RE we use a range of teaching techniques and activities that enable all pupils of different learning styles to engage and succeed. Activities in class include using drama, debate and ICT.

Short assessments will take place in class at the end of each term and these enable the pupils to be fully prepared for the end of year assessments. Homework will be found on the VLE.

All topics covered in RE this year will be subject to the New Religious Education Curriculum Directory (3-19) for Catholic Schools and Colleges in England and Wales.

Art & Design

Head of Department: Mrs Felicity Sanders

Overview

In connection to the theme of 'Food', Year 8 students will have the opportunity to develop independence taking steps to make creative decisions of their own. Through more robust research into relevant artists, undertaking critical reference work, discussion of themes and observational recording inspired by their findings, students will build greater contextual knowledge. By allowing more time for media experimentation and refinement of prior skill in the fundamental elements of Art and Design, students will begin to appreciate the complexity of the assessment criteria relevant to GCSE Art and Design.

Artists' works studied:

Pupils will develop classwork inspired by both the paintings of the Dutch Master golden age and contemporary painter Lucy Crick to improve observational work with the option to develop painting skill. To further critical awareness, pupils study the traditional painting style of Joel Penkman and develop graphic and textile work inspired by teatime treats. The print-making process forms part of pupils' learning in preparation for the creation of a lino print design.

Key media processes and techniques explored:

- Photography
- Digital design using Photopea
- Continuous line drawing
- Observational drawing in pencil from life/Acrylic painting refinement
- Graphic design using a range of dry media
- Sewing and applique
- Printmaking

Resources and Information:

The Art department is well stocked with both access to online gallery resources and a creative library of books. Pupils are invited to use free online software such as Photopea to work digitally and record their creative processes in a sketchbook throughout the year.

It is paramount to the development of the pupils' learning that their Art pack is cared for and brought to lessons every week in addition to the equipment contained being utilised for homework tasks.

Pupils can track the development of their skills through their class sketchbook and termly informal drawing exercises completed during lesson time. Homework is undertaken each week to extend their learning and will be posted when necessary on the VLE. Pupils can attend a Senior Art Club after school on a Monday as well as homework support one lunchtime a week. Pupils are strongly encouraged to visit Art Galleries to experience real Art up-close, talk about artforms and movements beyond those provided, and contribute personal artwork to the Student Gallery.

Sport & Physical Education

Head of Department: Mr Paul Hodgson

Overview

Within the core PE programme, we continue the ethos of the subject, which is a wide and varied programme to benefit the pastoral well-being, physical health and sporting enjoyment of all pupils. We aim to reinforce prior learning in various activities, by building on techniques and skills already developed and harnessed. There is an emphasis placed on technical and tactical awareness during lessons. Pupils will have the opportunity to learn to interpret the laws of games and officiate in matches. Pupils will learn the value of quality practice, training for specific sporting activities and how to follow a process to achieve long-term goals. With Year 8 Games being combined with Year 7, the culture and environment allow for leadership skills to be developed.

Pupils take part in the following activities:

- Football (option)
- Multi-Sports (option)
- Rowing (option)
- Rugby (option)
- Cricket (option)
- Tennis
- Athletics
- Squash
- Hockey
- Golf
- Swimming
- Water Polo
- Table Tennis
- Badminton

Games: Wednesday and Friday

PE: Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday

After-school training: Monday