



The Henrietta Barnett School

Year 9 Curriculum Overview



Authenticity - Kindness - Curiosity
Connection - Endeavour

www.hbschool.org.uk

Contents

4	Art
4	Classics
5	Drama
5	DTE
7	English
7	Geography
8	History
8	Mathematics
9	MFL
9	Music
10	Physical Education
10	PSHCE
11	Religious Studies
11	Science - Biology
12	Science - Chemistry
12	Science - Physics

Welcome from the Deputy Headteacher

Dear Parents,

Welcome to our statements of intent for the Year 9 Curriculum.

In Key Stage 3, we want to enable students to pursue a wide variety of academic and extra-curricular interests to the full. We want to foster a love of learning independently of exams and to encourage inquisitive, motivated and creative thinkers. We want to nurture resilience and robustness: students who are willing to take risks in the classroom and who are not afraid of failure.

We are fortunate to have students from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and we want them to enjoy their life at school and feel part of a supportive community, valuing this diversity. We want our students to become valued team players and also develop leadership skills. We want them to build and enjoy lasting friendships, to enjoy their time out of school and to lead a balanced life.

In the following pages, each subject department has set out the vision and intentions for its Year 9 curriculum.

Ms K Hasler
Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum)



Art

In Year 9, students are encouraged to work both collaboratively and more independently. The first project of the year is structured more as a personal project and investigation typical at GCSE level. They are required to respond to a broad theme such as 'People'. Here they expand their drawing, painting skills and develop a personal outcome.

Students also explore a range of photographic techniques and manipulate photographs to communicate different meanings. Students have the opportunity to look at Public Art and social activism. They study how artists and the general public use art and design to express their feelings about social issues. They develop graphic design skills and learn to make stencils. Architecture is covered in more detail in Year 9 where they analyse Baroque and Contemporary architecture. Students work three dimensionally by creating responses to using paper engineering and construction techniques.



Classics

In Year 9 students are ready to tackle Latin stories which assume a more advanced knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. The setting of these narratives is the town of Aquae Sulis (modern day Bath). Students continue to deepen their understanding of life in the ancient world by learning about Roman religious practices and by learning about the Roman army.

By the end of the Year 9 course, students have developed the problem-solving skills required to understand and translate Latin passages involving more complex syntax such as clauses containing the subjunctive, perfect participles and gerundives. Throughout the year, students continue to extend their knowledge of vocabulary and English derivatives. Students also extend their ability to read Greek through a project based on a New Testament story.

Drama

Year 9 further widens the range of theatre form, beginning with Elizabethan Theatre. Students learn the features of both Shakespearean tragedy and comedy, and experiment with stylised Shakespearean voicework and movement.

Students build upon their knowledge of naturalism, by examining the methods of Stanislavski, when they study classical texts such as *A Doll's House*. Students develop their approach to character development, extending their toolkit to include techniques such as emotional memory, 'The Magic If', units of action and the given circumstances. Year 9 culminates with a study of Musical Theatre through the decades, to extend and consolidate student knowledge of theatre history, and to give them an opportunity to further refine their vocal and physical skills.

As well as this, students study a wider variety of creative skills, such as stage combat, choreography, singing, song writing, episodic theatre, directing and extended group performance.



DTE

In Year 9, students will continue to build on the skills and knowledge developed in previous years by completing three more advanced projects: the Desk Lamp Project, the Storage Unit/Jewellery Box Project, and the Clock Project. These projects are designed to challenge students with more complex design briefs, encourage higher levels of independence, and prepare them for the demands of GCSE-level Design and Technology. They will combine skills in electronics, resistant materials, and product design, while placing a greater emphasis on accuracy, creativity, and refinement of finished outcomes.

DTE (continued)

The Desk Lamp Project introduces students to low-voltage electronics and product design. They will design and make a desk lamp powered by a 5-volt circuit, integrating components such as LEDs, resistors, switches, and USB connectors. This project strengthens their ability to read circuit diagrams, solder accurately, and troubleshoot electronic systems. Alongside the electronics, students will design and manufacture an appropriate casing or stand for the lamp, considering both function and aesthetics. This project encourages innovation, as students are asked to produce a product that is not only practical and safe but also stylish and appealing for a modern user. By the end, they will have a greater understanding of how electronics and design combine to produce professional-quality products.

The Storage Unit/Jewellery Box Project focuses on resistant materials and craftsmanship. Students will design and make a small storage solution, such as a jewellery box, using wood, manufactured boards, or a combination of materials. They will develop more advanced woodworking skills, including the use of joints (such as finger joints, dovetail joints, or dowels), as well as techniques for sanding, finishing, and assembling products with precision. The project requires careful measuring and marking, problem-solving when fitting components together, and attention to detail in producing a high-quality finish. Students will also consider user needs and aesthetics, incorporating decorative features or personalised elements. By completing this project, they will gain an appreciation of how design and craftsmanship combine to create functional yet attractive products.

The Clock Project allows students to apply their skills in resistant materials to create a working timepiece. They will be provided with a clock mechanism but must design and manufacture their own clock face and housing. This project encourages creativity and design flair, as students experiment with different styles, materials, and finishes to produce a unique outcome. They will develop accuracy in cutting and shaping materials, as well as skills in assembly and finishing. Through this project, students will also explore how design influences everyday objects, considering both function and style. The clock project offers an opportunity for students to demonstrate independence and creativity, producing a final product that reflects their own ideas and design identity.

By the end of Year 9, students will have developed a strong foundation of technical, creative, and problem-solving skills across resistant materials, product design, and electronics. They will be confident in using a wide range of tools, processes, and materials with accuracy and safety, and they will understand how to evaluate and refine their work to achieve professional results. These projects not only prepare students for the transition to GCSE Design Technology & Engineering but also give them valuable insight into how design and engineering solve real-world problems while allowing for individual creativity and innovation.

English

Students move away from reading texts in isolation and start to make connections between texts in terms of genre, themes and ideas. Students read texts of increasing length, complexity and sophistication, starting with Arthur Miller's classic American play 'The Crucible'. This is followed by an exploration of non-fiction texts. In reading 'Pride and Prejudice' by Jane Austen, students start to acquire high-level analytical skills such as an appreciation of irony. Students build resilience and confidence by adopting opposing points of view in debate, and honing their research skills in order to support their arguments.

The 'Conflict Poetry' unit encourages students to compare texts from different time periods, with a focus on comparative language and discourse markers. Students are encouraged to read with greater independence and confidence, reading a dystopian novel outside of lessons and collaborating with a group to develop a presentation and creative response to the text. Their creative writing becomes more experimental and subtle through their drafting and editing of their own dystopian story. By the end of KS3, students have acquired the skills to feel confident in the transition to GCSE, both in English Language and English Literature.



Geography

In Year 9, students use their accumulated knowledge to study another large threshold concept that is needed for progress in geography, climate change. They are expected to use the knowledge and understanding gained in Years 7 and 8 to study this, but also apply it to a more complex regional study in China. This means that by the end of KS3, they are ready to master the application of this knowledge to more abstract and complex views of places. Students are also building further on their locational knowledge by studying a particular place. Students revisit, in more detail, the concept of risk and apply it to tectonic hazards. Here, they combine a range of knowledge from previous years, such as risk and development, to make judgements about the scale of impacts of tectonic hazards in different locations. Students are truly starting to 'think like geographers' by combining complex information.

History

In Year 9, students build upon their previous investigations of ideas of authority, empire and resistance, in addition to the concept of nationhood. Students study both European and World history as they develop their skills of historical analysis. Studying the route to Indian Independence and the causes of the First World War provide opportunities to add greater complexity to arguments about causation and through a study of Weimar Germany, they will integrate this into their engagement with academic historical interpretations. Students will develop their confidence in their use of evidence, including their ability to select pertinent evidence to support their independent investigations into the First World War. We conclude the year with a study of the Holocaust which allows students to further their consideration of the diversity of experiences in the past.



Mathematics

The Year 9 curriculum is both the culmination of Key Stage 3 studies and introduces many concepts and skills that form part of the GCSE syllabus. Main topics taught this year include more advanced graph work, algebra work including simultaneous equations, algebraic products and factorising quadratics, proportionality, percentages work with appreciation/depreciation, trigonometry, congruency and similarity. This is the first year students are entered into the more advanced Intermediate Mathematics Challenge testing their problem solving skills against students up to Year 11.

MFL

In Year 9, students become markedly more confident in all skills using a wider range of vocabulary and tenses in French, German and Spanish. Students now look to master presentation skills in the language related to the various topics and cultures. They also become far more confident when speaking, using a variety of vocabulary and grammar, building on their language learning skills and knowledge gained since Year 7. Cultural knowledge is also deepened, and more mature topics are incorporated into the courses. By the end of the year, students will possess excellent foundations for their GCSE courses and be working at a post Key Stage 3 level.

They should all now have a wider understanding of language and cultures of the target language countries. The majority of the tenses needed for the next few years will have been covered. Culturally authentic materials, as well as project work are more frequently used.



Music

In Year 9, the focus is on the development of popular song in America and Western Europe through an in-depth study of African-American slave song and its development into the Blues, then Jazz and Rock 'n' Roll. The students explore early 'Tin-Pan Alley' standard song form and stock chord sequences of the early pop era.

They compose songs using the musical language of the Blues, and go on to create a cappella arrangements in the style of 1950s doo-wop. As a precursor to GCSE Music, students then study the compositional device of Ground Bass as exemplified in the work of English baroque composer Henry Purcell and explore (through performing and composing) how the technique is still used in both contemporary popular and classical music.

Physical Education

In Year 9, students are ready to master decision making in time-pressured situations. They apply their expert techniques and use their depth of tactical knowledge to demonstrate effective performances in a range of invasion games. They are able to evaluate their own performance in order to increase their contribution when part of a team and set realistic, but challenging, targets when performing as an individual.

The Dance Competition provides the opportunity to perform to a high standard in front of an audience. By the end of the KS3 course, students should have embedded regular physical activity into their routine and seek out challenges of more demanding situations and are preparing themselves for a lifetime of physical activity.



PSHCE

The teaching of Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) at HBS is timetabled for Years 7-11. The programme is broad and aims to prepare our students for all aspects of adult life, focusing on four themes: relationship with self, relationship with others, global citizenship and community and planning for the future.

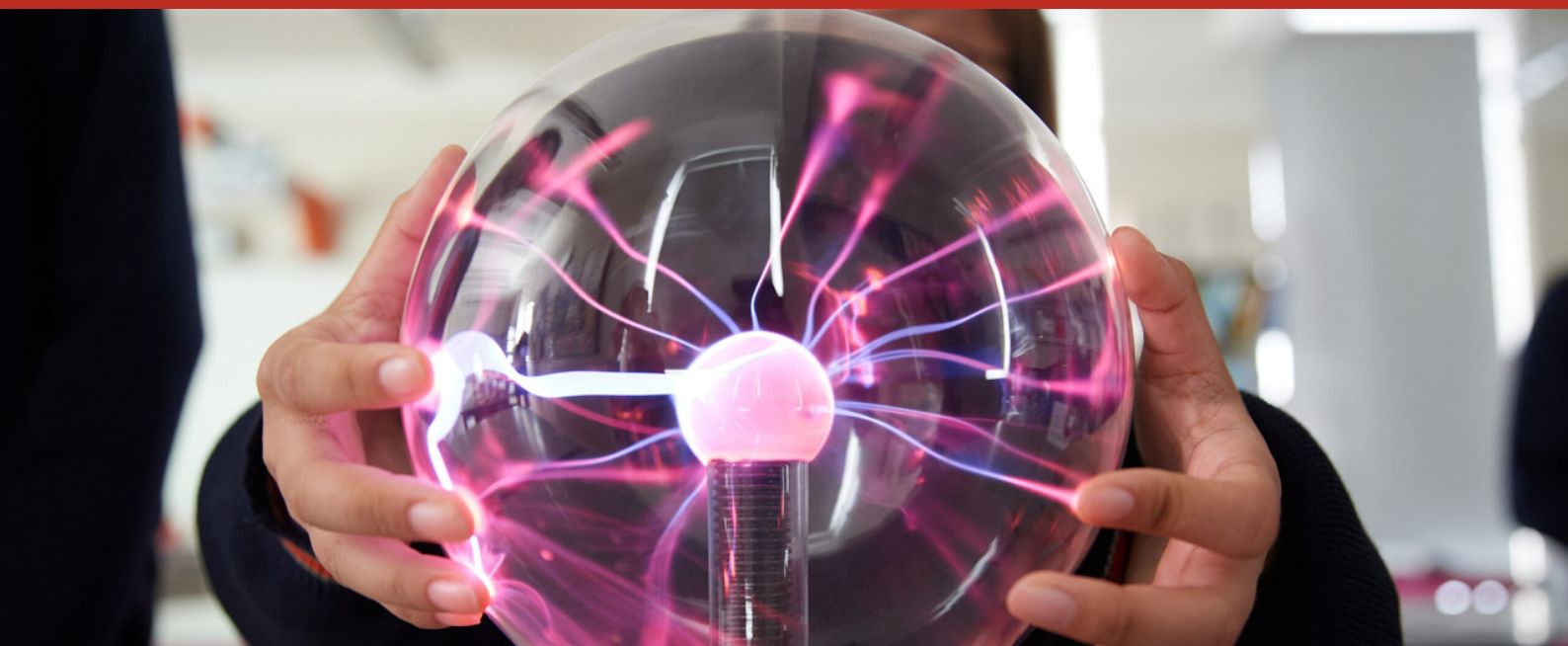
In Year 9, the curriculum will build on previous modules about wellbeing to focus on self-esteem; they will also learn about healthy and unhealthy coping strategies (including eating disorders). The relationship modules focus on managing expectations and they also build on knowledge of online safety with lessons on the sharing of sexual images.

Students will explore further the Unifrog platform and develop skills for the future with lessons on enterprise and careers as well as assistance on choosing GCSE subjects. With a focus on the world around them, they will learn more about HIV/AIDS and FGM, and develop critical thinking skills to deal with the daily bombardment of images and data. Lessons covering grief and bereavement signpost sources of support. Many of these themes are revisited in Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form to reflect the students' changing concerns and experiences.

The Schemes of Work and resources are regularly updated to ensure their relevance. Further details of the topics covered are also found on our website and are circulated at the start of each academic year.

Religious Studies

Learners in Year 9 begin with a study of religious responses to issues of human rights and social justice. They are encouraged to reflect on their own views, to engage in debate, and to evaluate moral issues surrounding topics such as freedom of speech, gender equality, abortion and divorce. The year continues with an exploration of philosophical questions relating to the problem of evil and suffering, such as, 'where was G-d during the Holocaust?' They are required to research a particular survivor and consider responses of individuals such as Anne Frank and Lord Jonathan Sacks. The Summer Term includes an examination of themes raised in a documentary called 'White Girl,' where 11 year old Leah becomes friends with her neighbour Yasmin and discovers that the culture she was initially intimidated by isn't so alien after all. Year 9 is very enjoyable and equips students well should they opt for Religious Studies at GCSE.



Science - Biology

In Year 9, students commence their GCSE studies in Biology following the AQA specification. Students delve deeper into biological processes that they were introduced to in KS3. Students synthesise their knowledge from cellular level to the organisation and function of a whole organism. This understanding is applied to real life examples such as the interaction between the environment and genetics in non-communicable diseases. This allows them to make informed life choices. Students become more confident with familiar equipment such as microscopes. They become more independent in using data to inform conclusions whilst identifying limitations and the crucial role of control variables in biological experimental methods.

Science - Chemistry

In Year 9, Students have started the AQA GCSE Chemistry course and are taught by subject specialists. They are stretched and challenged more and encouraged to go beyond the curriculum wherever possible. Students revisit topics taught in Year 7 and 8 in much greater detail. They gain a thorough understanding of atomic structure, the Periodic Table and the different types of chemical bonding.

A greater focus is placed on how these topics link to each other, e.g. how the type of bonding affects the properties of a substance. Students are also introduced to quantitative chemistry. They master the mathematical skills that are specifically relevant to Chemistry. Students become confident in handling Chemistry lab equipment and proficient at obtaining reliable data. They are able to critically analyse their results and evaluate the limitations of their experimental methods.



Science - Physics

In Year 9, students begin studying GCSE Physics following the AQA specification. Students must start to develop the quality of their scientific explanations by using terminology accurately and consistently, both when describing physical phenomena and during experimental work. Students review the concepts of energy, electricity and matter at greater depth, and begin to use their scientific knowledge to make predictions about the outcomes of different situations. Students develop their mathematical skills in the context of Physics, selecting and using appropriate equations to solve problems.

Students start to learn how to use graphs to describe patterns in more detail, and explain these relationships using their scientific knowledge. They also take their experimental skills to the next level, learning new concepts and techniques through a series of Required Practicals.



The
Henrietta Barnett
School