



The Henrietta Barnett School

Year 9 Curriculum Overview



Authenticity - Kindness - Curiosity
Connection - Endeavour

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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)



The School Day

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Pre-school	School opens from 8am	School opens from 8am	School opens from 8.15am	School opens from 8am	School opens from 8am
8.30-8.50	Registration/ Assembly	Registration/ Assembly	Registration at 8.45am	Registration/ Assembly	Registration/ Assembly
8.50-9.50	Period 1	Period 1	Period 1	Period 1	Period 1
9.55-10.55	Period 2	Period 2	Period 2	Period 2	Period 2
10.55-11.15	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
11.15-12.15	Period 3	Period 3	Period 3	Period 3	Period 3
12.20-1.20	Period 4	Period 4	Period 4	Period 4	Period 4
1.20-2.20	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
2.20-3.20	Period 5	Period 5	Period 5	Period 5	Period 5
After school	Students may be staying for a range of after-school supervised activities; students may stay to work independently in the Library until 4.30pm (Mon-Thurs) and 3.45pm (Friday)				

Delivery of the Timetable

From September 2026 the school timetable is organised into a 50 period fortnight, with 25 hours of teaching per week (5 hours per day). In addition to this there is form-time before school.

Subject	Hours per fortnight
English	6
Mathematics	5
Science	6
Geography	3
History	3
RS	2
Latin	2
French	3
German	3
Spanish	3
Music	2
Art	2
Drama	2
Computer Science	0
DTE	2
PE	4
Compass/PHSE	2
Total	50

Art

In Year 9, students develop greater independence and confidence in their creative practice, working both collaboratively and individually. Projects encourage students to explore personal interests, develop their ideas and take greater ownership of their artistic outcomes, preparing them for the demands of GCSE Art, Craft and Design.

The year begins with a personal project and investigation inspired by a broad theme, such as 'People'. Drawing on approaches similar to those used at GCSE, students develop their observational drawing and painting skills, experiment with different techniques and work towards creating a personal outcome that reflects their ideas and intentions. Students explore a range of photographic techniques, learning how to manipulate and transform photographs to communicate different meanings.

They also investigate public art and social activism, examining how artists and members of the public use art and design to express their views and respond to social issues. Through these projects, students develop graphic design skills and learn to create stencils, considering how visual communication can convey messages and engage audiences.

Throughout Year 9, students strengthen their ability to research, experiment, refine and evaluate their work, developing the practical, analytical and creative skills needed for further study in Art, Craft and Design.

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.

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

In Year 9, students are given the challenge of reading texts of increasing length and complexity, both in terms of the ideas and the language used.

They begin the year by reading the classic play 'The Crucible' which provides them with an opportunity to learn about seventeenth century history, as well as modern American politics. When reading 'Pride and Prejudice' by Jane Austen, students grow more attuned to tone and irony, as well as humour. Students also explore a range of contemporary non-fiction and are given the chance to write in a range of forms and registers. The Conflict Poetry unit encourages students to compare texts, integrating their comparisons. Students end the year with an independent project exploring the genre of dystopian literature; they are encouraged to develop their understanding of the genre through independent reading.

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, whole class singing is developed even further to include a cappella singing and more advanced composition in small ensemble settings.

ICT is used to complement this work with sequencing (Logic Express) and notation (Sibelius) software enabling the students to take a more personalised approach to their creative work.

In Year 9 topics will include work on a cappella singing, song writing and projects connected with the origins of western popular music in the USA, such as slave songs, spirituals and the Blues. Units of work also cover Blues music, early Rock'n'Roll and Jazz as well as an exploration of the Baroque technique of Ground Bass.

Physical Education

Year 9 provides pupils with opportunities to further refine their techniques and develop their ability to use skills, tactics and strategies effectively in a range of activities. Pupils are encouraged to take greater responsibility for their own performance and to make informed decisions in both individual and team-based activities.

A particular focus is placed on using tactics and strategies to overcome opponents in competitive situations. Pupils develop their ability to communicate, collaborate and adapt their approach according to the demands of the activity.

Dance forms an important part of the curriculum, giving pupils the opportunity to choreograph and perform using a range of stimuli. Through this unit, pupils develop creativity, musicality, performance skills and self-confidence, culminating in a performance day where they can showcase their work.

Compass

The teaching of PSHCE at HBS is timetabled for Years 7-11 and delivered through our new curriculum, Compass. The programme is broad, and aims to help our students develop the confidence, knowledge and skills to manage themselves and their relationships and to equip them for adult life. It reflects the school values of authenticity, endeavour, curiosity connection and kindness.

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 personal boundaries and managing expectations and online safety (with a focus on the impact of sharing 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 misogyny, HIV/AIDS and FGM. Lessons covering grief and bereavement signpost sources of support. The new strands of the Compass programme are also covered, with modules on sustainability and the environment, financial literacy, philosophy and critical thinking and leadership and management.

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.

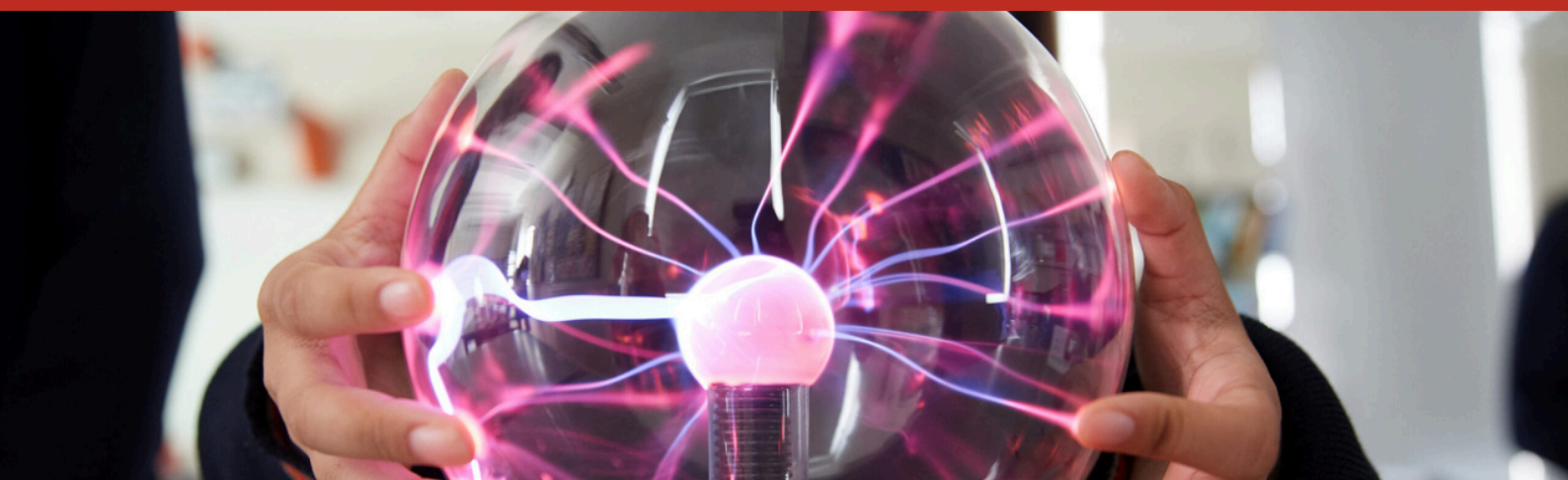
Religious Studies

In Year 9 they cover the following:

- Term one: Rights & Responsibilities
- Term two: The human impact of the Holocaust
- Term three: 'Morality matters'

Students learn about different forms of rights and responsibilities within the UK and on a global level, including Human Rights. They have a platform to debate and are encouraged to consider a view they may normally oppose broadening their skills. They examine the case of Jamie Bulger and the ethical issues it raises on an individual as well as a national level.

In Term two Students explore the human side of the Holocaust and the emotional impact it had. We bring in the play; 'Kindness,' where students explore the story of survivor Susan Pollock. They then reflect on this and produce an assed piece of work, sharing their thoughts and feelings as well as the impact. Throughout the year students will be expected to present independently as well as collaboratively.



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.

Homework

Homework is set weekly or fortnightly by subjects during Key Stage 3, in accordance with each subject's curriculum. Students can do their homework on the day that best suits them within the deadlines that are set, and are encouraged to make a homework timetable or schedule to help them to organise their work – form tutors can support with this if required.

The table below suggests the usual maximum amount of homework that students can expect to receive, per week, for each subject. Please note that not all subjects will set homework every week, nor will it always take the full allowance of time – but homework tasks are designed to fit within these time allocations over the week, or fortnight.

Subject	Weekly minutes
Maths	70
English	60
Science	75
Geography	35
History	35
MFL and Latin	75
Art	15
DTE	35
Drama	20
Music	10
RS	20
Computing	N/A
PE	20
Compass	0
TOTAL	7h 50
Maximum amount as per homework policy	9h



The
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School