



**St Nicholas' School**  
**Year Eight**  
**Curriculum Booklet**  
**2021**



## **INTRODUCTION**

### **School Attendance**

It is vital that all pupils attend school regularly, unless there are special circumstances. It should be noted that if a pupil is absent for more than six days each term, over the course of their time in the senior school, this will be equivalent to half a year and will significantly reduce their chances of good grades at GCSE. A national survey has shown that 90% of pupils whose attendance is as low as 85% are likely to achieve less than five GCSE pass grades. If your daughter does have to miss lessons for any reason, she will be expected to copy up the work and to try to understand it. She should always ask for help if she has difficulties.

### **School Events**

There are several events that pupils are required to attend. These include Open Days throughout the year and the Summer Fayre at the end of June. The dates of these events can be found in the school calendar. Non-attendance at these school events, without good reason, will affect a pupil's chances of becoming a school officer in Year 10.

### **Equipment**

All pupils should have the following equipment with them every day. All items should be clearly named.

- 30cm ruler
- pen and spare cartridges (black)
- pencils
- pencil sharpener
- rubber
- coloured pencils
- highlighter pen
- scientific calculator
- scissors
- glue stick
- dictionary
- The Good News Bible
- French dictionary, Spanish dictionary

### **The School Planner**

At the beginning of the year every pupil is given a school planner, in which to write her weekly timetable, add important events to the calendar and record all homework. It is designed to be an easy means of communication between home and school and should be signed by the form teacher and parents each week. The planner also includes the School Rules and parents need to familiarise themselves with these. The School Rules are also to be found in the Parent Handbook.

### **Keeping in Touch**

There will be opportunities to meet with your daughter's teachers, both formally and informally during the year. You will find the dates on the school calendar. You will receive one written report at the end of the Summer Term. In addition to this, you will receive Grade Sheets at the end of the other terms. These will contain grades and a comment on work or progress.

If you have any concerns please make use of the planner, as mentioned above, or contact the office to make an appointment to speak to your daughter's form tutor.

### **Office 365**

The school is currently using Microsoft Office 365 as our VLE (Virtual Learning Environment). Through Microsoft Teams students will have access to online resources, class presentations and templates and they will hand in electronic assignments and have virtual classes as and when the need arises. There are currently various videos on Teams that are available for any help, but if your daughter needs additional assistance, they can contact the IT department.

## **Homework**

In Year 8, pupils will have an average of 90 minutes each night, although additional pieces of work may occasionally be set in subjects such as music, textiles, food etc. Homework is likely to include reading tasks, question sheets, research, revision etc and will be used to encourage your daughter to work more independently. Written tasks normally need to be handed in the next day. Pupils may be asked to complete a piece of work on the computer, and this should be printed at home and submitted for marking in the same way.

Work on the computer may involve research using the internet but all pupils are given advice on the safe use of the internet in Computer Science lessons and as part of the PSHE course. All pupils are made aware of the ICT Acceptable Use Policy, which is a separate document.

Teachers aim to set work which can be completed in the time allocated. However, pupils do not all work at the same pace and, therefore, some pupils may find that it takes a little longer. If this is a problem, please contact the teacher concerned, using the planner, so that the teacher is aware, but your daughter may need to be encouraged to work faster. She needs to complete the task, if possible, to demonstrate what she can do and so that she gets sufficient practice in preparation for future examinations. Homework is not intended to be easy as pupils need to develop resilience, so that they can attempt challenging examination questions. You should, therefore, not expect your daughter to achieve full marks on a regular basis. Without struggle, there is no progress!

If work is not completed on time, or is not of a satisfactory standard, your daughter will be asked to do it again. If this happens on several occasions you will be notified using the planner. The school also holds a weekly lunchtime detention for pupils who repeatedly fail to complete their work. A lack of commitment at KS3 could impact on a pupil's progress and, in turn, affect their GCSE Grade.

**Assessment**

Pupils will sit one set of examinations in May/June. Parents will be informed of the results in the school report. A set or year average will be given for each subject, so that it will be possible to see how your daughter is achieving compared to her peer group.

At other times, continuous assessment will take place and parents will be given information on their daughter's achievements on the grade sheets.

## **CURRICULUM SUPPORT**

We realise that pupils develop at different rates and that some pupils benefit from a little extra help. The school, therefore, offers Curriculum Support to help students achieve their best by learning strategies to overcome any barriers to learning. This support is provided by trained staff to meet students' individual needs.

Pupils may be tutored in small groups, or they may be given additional help within a lesson. A few girls may be offered Curriculum Support instead of one foreign language.

Members of Curriculum Support staff also liaise with subject teachers to ensure that students receive the support they need in class. Small classes enable subject teachers to provide pupils with additional help and scaffolding for their learning.

If you are concerned that your child may have learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, please contact the curriculum support department in the first instance [csdept@st-nicholasschool.co.uk](mailto:csdept@st-nicholasschool.co.uk). We will be able to talk with you and your child about their needs and advise you as to your next steps.

## **GIFTED AND TALENTED**

A number of pupils show a flair for a particular subject and differentiation during lessons enables them to be challenged. They are also encouraged to take part in various competitions, visits and enrichment activities.

## **ENGLISH**

The Department broadly follows the National Curriculum aims, which are to develop the ability of pupils in the areas of speaking, listening, reading and writing.

### **Speaking and Listening**

Pupils will be required to show in a series of spoken tasks that they can: recount personal experiences; share and exchange ideas and views; do an individual presentation; plan and take part in group discussion and presentation; be aware of the need to vary the language used to suit the situation; use the grammar and vocabulary of spoken English.

### **Reading and Writing**

Pupils will be required to read a range of texts, non-literary and literary, media and information and texts from other cultures. They will study a selection of novels, plays and of poetry, including 19<sup>th</sup> Century texts. Figurative language will be taught. They will write creatively in poetry and prose, as well as analytically and discursively. They will be following the AQA language scheme. They will also write diaries, scripts, formal and informal letters, leaflets and advertisements. Comprehension, summary and comparison work will be practised too. Pupils are encouraged to use ICT and to redraft their writing. Grammar and punctuation rules will be taught and reinforced.

### **Presentation**

Pupils will be required to spell common words accurately, write in a cursive style, and present finished work clearly and accurately.

### **Homework**

Homework is set twice a week. It should be handed in promptly and checked for spelling and grammatical errors. Pupils should use homework to consolidate work done in class as well as to assist their individual learning, for example by wider reading and research, and extended writing. It should also be used to build up their resilience; they should persevere when faced with demanding tasks.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Depending on which group they are in, girls will study all or most of the topics below. Year 8 builds on the foundations started in Year 7. They use Maths Frameworking 2.1, 2.2 or 2.3.

Topic areas covered:

Working with numbers

Geometry

Probability

Percentages

Sequences

Area of 2D and 3D shapes (*Surface area and volume of prisms*)

Graphs

Simplifying numbers (*Number*)

Interpreting data

Algebra

Congruence and scaling (*Congruent shapes*)

Fractions and decimals

Proportion

Circles

Equations and formulae

Comparing data

*Shape and ratio*

Each chapter is assessed using the review questions at the end. They are examined in May/June.

*Italics indicates only in Book 2.3.*



## **Homework**

Pupils will be given two homework tasks each week. The tasks will be varied and will include exercises supporting and reinforcing class work, investigative problem-solving and occasional research. They will be designed to take 30 minutes, but some pupils may take a little longer. However, if homework regularly takes too long, pupils should speak to the teacher concerned. It is vital that pupils attempt to complete every task. Homework is designed to develop independent learning and resilience, in preparation for GCSE.

When completing written tasks, pupils will be expected to present their work neatly and think about the layout of their solutions. These factors will be considered when the work is marked. Their methodology should be clearly shown.

## **SCIENCE**

In Year 8, pupils study the three separate sciences. The curriculum is designed to build on the knowledge gained at KS2 and to encourage independent thinking. The course broadly follows the National Curriculum but in many cases the work is taken to a higher level. In addition, pupils develop their ability to plan, carry out, analyse and evaluate their own experiments. They also develop their ability to obtain and analyse information relating to topical issues and draw their own conclusions.

Pupils must provide lab-coats for all practical lessons; otherwise, they will be unable to take part.

## **BIOLOGY**

Pupils study the following topics:

- Breathing
- Digestion
- Respiration
- Photosynthesis
- Evolution
- Inheritance

## **CHEMISTRY**

Pupils study the following topics:

- Elements, atoms and compounds
- The Periodic Table
- Types of reaction
- Chemical energy
- Structure of the Earth
- Climate
- Earth resources

## **PHYSICS**

Pupils study the following topics:

- Motion
- Force and pressure
- Waves; Sound and light
- Heat

### **Homework**

Pupils will be given one homework task per science each week. The tasks will be varied and will include research, accounts of experiments, worksheets, revision etc. They will be designed to take 30 minutes, but some pupils may take a little longer. However, if homework regularly takes too long, pupils should speak to the teacher concerned. Occasionally, pupils will be asked to complete an extended task over a few weeks. It is vital that pupils attempt to complete every task and show evidence of this, even if something seems challenging. Homework is designed to develop independent learning and resilience, in preparation for GCSE.

When completing written tasks, pupils will be expected to use their own words, present their work neatly and think about their spelling and grammar. These factors will be taken into account when the work is marked. Pupils should also get into the habit of proof-reading their work before it is submitted for marking, as this will be a vital skill at GCSE.

## **COMPUTER SCIENCE**

Computer Science is a compulsory subject for pupils during Key Stage 3. Lessons contain a mixture of Digital Literacy, Information Technology and Computer Science – including coding.

All pupils sit an external examination - OCR Functional Skills in ICT - during Year 9. Computer Science is then offered as a GCSE option at Key Stage 4.

The Scheme of Work is continually evolving owing to the rapid changes in technology and its use. We aim to deliver a vibrant and cohesive Scheme of Work that is topical and relevant and fits the needs of our pupils.

Topics that will be covered in Year 9 during 2021- 2022 may include:

- ✓ Effective and safe use of the Internet
- ✓ Mobile technology and apps
- ✓ Excel spreadsheets, including advanced features
- ✓ Computational thinking and algorithms
- ✓ Computer coding using Python
- ✓ Advanced features of word processing

Computer Science lesson material will be available on Microsoft Teams. Office 365 will be used during lessons and the resources will also enable girls to catch up with work at home in the event of a lesson being missed for any reason.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

In Year 8 pupils study either French, Mandarin and Spanish for two periods a week each, or French for four periods plus either Mandarin or Spanish for two periods.

### **FRENCH**

French lessons are conducted mainly in the target language. Pupils continue to develop the skills for clear communication, as well as gaining an insight into life in the French-speaking world. "Studio 2" is currently used in Year 8.

In May, Year 8 pupils spend a week in Normandy, doing a variety of activities instructed entirely in French.

All girls should have a French-English dictionary for work in class and at home.

The following areas are covered:

- Media - television, cinema, reading, internet use, Perfect Tense
- A week in Paris - tourism, opinions on what they saw
- Asking questions
- My identity - personality, relationships, music tastes, clothing tastes
- Home life - describing the home, prepositions, talking about meals, describing a past event
- Talent - talking about talent and ambition, verb + infinitive, modal verbs, superlatives, working with a variety of tenses

Homework is set once a week. Work is expected to be set out neatly with the date and title in French. All work should be checked carefully for spelling and syntax mistakes before handing in. Typical tasks include a short piece of writing, grammar exercises, a page from their workbook, learning vocabulary for a spelling and comprehension test or memorising a presentation to deliver to the class. These are all very important to their language learning. The work will normally be based on the most recent lesson and provides an opportunity to consolidate a child's learning. Most girls will be able to complete the

tasks independently and are required to use their own resources (textbook, dictionary) to achieve the necessary accuracy.

The use of translation software is strongly discouraged, as it does not help the girls learn and it produces largely inaccurate French.

Every girl will be expected to learn each week's vocabulary as she goes along.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

### **SPANISH**

Year 8 girls study Spanish for two lessons per week and all lessons are conducted mainly in the target language. The lessons focus on providing a grounding in basic grammar and building confidence in speaking.

The topics covered in Spanish include: talking about hobbies and sports, giving opinions and likes and dislikes, describing school life, telling the time and talking about the weather.

Homework is set once a week. Work should be set out neatly with the date and title in Spanish, and should be checked thoroughly before handing in. Most girls will be able to complete the tasks independently at this early stage.

### **CHINESE MANDARIN**

Year 8 girls study Mandarin for two lessons per week. Girls are expected to make their own flashcards for regular revision and practice writing Chinese characters at home.

Topic areas covered are:

- Food and Drink
- School life - subjects and preferences and places in school
- Daily Routine
- Sports and Hobbies
- Weather and Seasons
- Clothes and Colours
- Transport
- Chinese Festivals and Food Culture

Homework is set once a week. Work should be set out neatly and should be checked thoroughly before handing in. Regular independent vocabulary learning is vital to succeed in this subject.

At the end of this year, pupils will select which languages to continue in Year 9.

## HISTORY

In Year 8, we hope to generate a continued interest in History and develop skills and techniques introduced in Year 7, particularly the appraisal of varying types of source material. There are three Core Studies in this year. Pupils will begin Year 8 studying 'The Making of the United Kingdom, 1500-1750'. This is followed by a study of Britain 1750 – 1900 which includes Britain's worldwide expansion, the industrialisation process and ensuing political developments. They also examine the history of the Black Peoples of the Americas from the early days of slavery to the fight for civil rights.

Topics studied include:

- The causes and events of the English Civil War
- Society, economy and culture across this period: for example, work and leisure, religion and superstition in daily life, medicine and disease, theatre, art, music and literature.
- The Industrial Age; to include living and working conditions and the British Empire
- Black Peoples of the Americas
- A study of a significant society or issue in world history and its interconnections with other world developments: We study the USA in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

Homework

- Sometimes an extended piece of homework may be given which would not be expected to be completed in one homework, but over two or more allocated slots depending on the nature of the task. Pupils are expected to organise themselves so that they do not leave such tasks to the last minute but plan their time accordingly.
- Pupils are expected to read through their work prior to handing it in and are expected to review spelling, punctuation and grammar in accordance with the marking.



## **GEOGRAPHY**

In Year 8, pupils continue to look at the world around them and understand the factors, both physical and human, which change the environment. They start to develop an understanding of High Income and Low Income Countries. The pupils will carry out fieldwork on a local river, developing their data handling and presentation skills.

Topics studied include:

- What shapes the land? Weathering, erosion, river and coastal features
- Too many people? Population density and distribution. Megacities. How world population is changing. Ageing populations. The impact of migration in different parts of the world, looking at case studies in Mexico, Ethiopia and the UK.
- Africa – a land of contrasts. We will focus on two different countries at differing levels of development e.g. Ghana and South Sudan.

Homework will be set weekly although some tasks may extend over several homework slots and girls will need to organise themselves so that they have time to complete the task.

Some tasks may involve research using the internet or other sources and girls will be expected to write up their research in their own words. Word processed work should always be printed off at home in advance of lessons.

Girls should develop the habit of checking their work for spelling and grammatical errors and will be given a vocabulary check list to help.

## **CLASSICAL CIVILISATION**

In Year 8, there are two lessons of Classical Civilisation each week. The pupils either continue with Latin or study Classical Civilisation. Extra English and Curriculum Support will be offered, instead of Latin or Classical Civilisation, where appropriate.

## **LATIN**

During the year, pupils acquire greater understanding of Latin grammar and develop their translation skills. There is a new interactive course with more self-assessment exercises.

Language aspects include:

- irregular verbs, the pluperfect tense and the imperative
- relative clauses
- agreement of adjectives
- vocabulary
- the first three declensions
- pronouns

The new textbook puts more emphasis on the historical background. The topics will be:

- Slavery
- Londinium and Camulodunum (Britain's first city)
- The Druids and Boudicca
- Military life at Aquae Sulis
- The Romans and the Mediterranean Sea

Pupils will be given one homework of 30 minutes each week. The tasks will be varied (translations, learning vocabulary and grammar, historical projects, etc.) and they aim to develop independent study. Pupils should develop the habit of checking their work for spelling and grammatical errors.

There are resources, worksheets and web links in Teams, designed to reinforce the material studied in class.

## **CLASSICAL CIVILISATION**

Pupils who do not continue with Latin will take Classical Civilisation. This fascinating subject not only enables girls to acquire knowledge and understanding of the classical world, but also explains its influence on later times.

The course includes the following topics:

- Background to the origins of Civilisations
- The Minoan Civilisation
- The Mycenaean Civilisation
- Troy
- Greek mythology and the Odyssey
- Sparta and Athens
- Greek gods and heroes

Pupils will be given one homework of 30 minutes each week. The tasks will be varied (research, essays, historical projects, etc.) and they aim to develop independent study. Pupils should develop the habit of checking their work for spelling and grammatical errors.

There are resources, worksheets and web links in Teams, designed to reinforce the material studied in class.

## **RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

The teaching of Religious Studies provides spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

In Year 8, pupils continue to examine values, beliefs and ideas and how they affect people's lives and actions. They study the history, beliefs, worship, festivals and lifestyle of other world religions. In order to develop spiritual growth, reflection and self-expression, pupils are particularly encouraged to ask questions and express their own thoughts and opinions.

The religions studied are:

- Hinduism
- Judaism
- Buddhism
- Islam

## **DRAMA**

In Year 8, the pupils have two lessons of Drama each week. The year is split into three topics:

### **Autumn term – Pantomime**

The overall aims of the project are:

- 1 To develop a knowledge of the genre of Pantomime
- 2 To develop the skills necessary for this form of theatre, with the inclusion of music and comedy
- 3 To develop organisational skills
- 4 To extend further each pupil's level of confidence and range in vocal and physical theatre skills
- 5 To increase further their knowledge of technical staging

The pupils are introduced to the genre and given a brief history of "Pantomime". In groups, they then devise, rehearse and perform their own pantomimes. The 'best' pantomime in each class will be performed to the Infants at the end of term.

### **Spring Term – Dance and Physical Theatre**

The pupils are led through a series of dance and physical theatre lessons. They learn the various techniques required for movement work, culminating in a small group devised piece, created by themselves.

### **Summer Term – Voice and Radio Plays**

Following a group practical examination piece, the girls will focus on the Voice. They will undertake a course of lessons on how to use the voice correctly for dramatic performance. They will then finish the year writing, rehearsing and recording their own Radio Plays.

## **ASSESSMENT**

An examination is held in the Summer Term, which consists of a practical and written paper (50% each). A monologue is performed in the Autumn Term, for assessment, and a group piece for the Summer Term practical examinations.

The girls are also formally assessed on a termly basis and given the opportunity to complete a self-evaluation form at the end of each term.

All pupils have the opportunity to take part in the annual Senior Production. Tuition provides the foundation and basis for the study of GCSE Drama.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

In Year 8, the pupils are taught across a range of activity areas. Each activity area will bring with it different qualities, skills, rules and tactics. The pupils will also be taught about the importance of physical health and well-being. The focus will be on building on their current knowledge and understanding and increasing confidence and resilience. The pupils will work on their teamwork, sportsmanship and leadership skills. They will expand their individual skills and learn how to best apply them effectively in competitive situations to gain an advantage. We will start the year off exploring the core sports, in which they will have opportunities to represent the school and compete in regular inter school fixtures throughout the Autumn and Spring Terms. In the Summer Term we will look at the sports they can compete in, in that term including preparing for Sports Day! There will be opportunities for the pupils to further progress their skills and gameplay in lunchtime and after-school clubs. We enter local leagues as well as friendly fixtures and district competitions. Some girls go on to represent the area and Hampshire from the district competitions in the relevant activities.

The following table is a guide to the activities that will be covered:

AUTUMN TERM	SPRING TERM	SUMMER TERM
Netball Hockey Football Basketball Cross Country	Netball Hockey Football Basketball Badminton Gymnastics Health & Fitness	Cricket Rounders Athletics Tennis

## **MUSIC**

Pupils in Year 8 study a broad music course, building upon the skills developed in Year 7. Listening, performing and composing form the core activities for each of the three units of work.

### **Classical Music and Media**

This unit develops pupils' ability to recognise how music can enhance a visual image. Pupils explore how music can convey ideas and communicate messages in a range of media, including Television and Radio. They will compose, notate, perform and record their pieces using appropriate rhythmic, melodic and harmonic devices. In addition, they will develop their understanding of the key musical characteristics of the Classical era.

### **Indian Classical Music**

Pupils will develop the ability to identify, explore and perform ragas and talas within the conventions and context of Indian Classical Music. They will sing and play Indian ragas before composing their own. Pupils will learn how to improvise and extend their ideas within the confines of the style. They will add accompaniment patterns and perform, record and evaluate their own work.

### **Song Writing**

Pupils will learn to recognise different structures within songs and how to compose a convincing melody with an appropriate accompaniment. They will learn about word setting, structure, texture and chords. This will enable them to compose and perform their own song. Pupils will notate and record their work and critically appraise their own song writing skills.

Pupils will also have the opportunity to take part in choirs, orchestras and other ensembles as well as taking part in school-based workshops.

## **TEXTILES**

In Year 8, pupils study Textiles for a term and a half, whilst their contemporaries study Food Technology. They continue to develop the skills of stitching and sewing machine use.

The girls are given the task of designing and making a textile lantern, which takes inspiration from a photograph of a chosen landscape or seascape. The emphasis will be on the sourcing of suitable fabrics and components from new and recycled materials. Designs are created using a variety of decorative techniques, such as appliqué, embroidery stitches, patchwork and quilting. The need to choose appropriate colours and stitches, to create the desired effects, is discussed during the design process. The project includes the use of e-textiles to achieve a lighting effect.

Use of the sewing machine is extended by stitching appliquéd designs in which accuracy and manipulation skills are important.

The pupils will be expected to complete a piece of practical or written homework each week. They are expected to read through their work and review their spelling, punctuation and grammar as a matter of good practice.



## **FOOD**

Food is taught for three lessons each week, which is grouped together and carried out as one session. The subject is taught on a term and a half rotation, with one half of year 8 studying Food with the other in Textiles, before they then swap over.

In Food pupils will carry out a number of practical tasks, which build on their current culinary skills. In year 8 these skills include; making pastry and breads, learning how to make a béchamel sauce, knife skills, and baking. Theory work is focussed on teaching a variety of elements appropriate to cooking such as; health, safety and hygiene in the kitchen, healthy eating, dietary requirements, organic and genetically modified food and the science of ingredients and processes.

Practical tasks include:

- Pasta
- Pastry
- Breads
- Macaroni Cheese
- Spring rolls
- Savoury tartlets
- Muffins

Pupils will be expected to provide the majority of their ingredients for practical tasks, with some difficult to transport items being provided (eggs, oil etc) for a small fee. They will be given a practical demonstration of the dish in one lesson and will be expected to bring in the ingredients to make it the next. This will mean that they will have a week's notice to buy ingredients. In addition to ingredients, pupils will be expected to bring in a suitable container so that they can take their food products home.

The pupils will be expected to complete a written task for homework each week, which often is an evaluation of their practical task. They are expected to neatly present all work to a standard that they would be happy to have put on display.

## **ART**

During Year 8, the girls will build upon the skills learned during Year 7 and will gain some new ones which will increase their artistic vocabulary.

They will develop their drawing and painting skills and their knowledge of artists and designers and their work, both contemporary and historic. They will take on more demanding tasks in painting, mixed media and three-dimensional work, learning new techniques for making and decoration. They will enhance their working knowledge of computer graphics and elements of Design Technology. For some projects they will be encouraged to use photography and i-pads to develop pieces. There will be opportunity to produce more personal work through some of the topics.

Each term the pupils will be working to a theme and projects and outings may be arranged with other departments to develop cross-curricular links.

There is the opportunity to attend Art Club as an extra-curricular activity and to be involved with productions that take place during the year.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION**

The PSHE course throughout the school incorporates life skills, health education, careers and citizenship. The material is chosen to take into account the ethos and aims of the school.

The year 8 course covers;

- Alcohol and drug misuse and pressures relating to drug use.
- Equality of opportunity in careers and life choices, and different types and patterns of work.
- Discrimination in all its forms, including: racism, religious discrimination, disability, discrimination, sexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.
- Emotional wellbeing, mental health and emotional wellbeing, including body image and coping strategies.
- Gender identity, sexual orientation, consent, 'sexting', and an introduction to contraception.
- Digital literacy; Online safety, digital literacy, media reliability and gambling hooks.