

Curriculum Handbook Years 7 & 8 2012



This document when viewed electronically has links from the [index](#) to each subject outline

Introduction

Years 7 and 8 Curriculum at St Catherine's School is core, which means that all students complete a set of core / compulsory subjects over two years.

These subjects are:

- Art
- Drama
- English
- Geography
- History
- Languages (Compulsory for Years 7 and 8. Students study French as well as Japanese or Mandarin Chinese.)
- Mathematics
- Music
- Personal Development
- Physical Education
- Science

At Years 9 and 10, a number of core subjects are offered, together with a selection of elective subjects. These elective subjects are reviewed annually and, subsequently, changes are made to the subjects offered to prospective students of these levels each year.

Educational Support

Educational Support is a subject offered to students with specific learning difficulties. The Director of Student Wellbeing is responsible for allocating places in this subject. A decision is made on the basis of discussion with a student's parents, a recommendation from the student's primary school or other agency, and very importantly, on the basis of a range of assessments such as educational, cognitive and language assessments. This subject is studied in place of either one or both languages, depending on the particular needs of the student.

Parents should contact Mrs Lyn Henshall if they wish to discuss this subject.

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Year 7 Art

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Students use a range of starting points to generate and develop real, imaginary and abstract ideas. They explore and communicate ideas using a range of media and technologies to develop skills and techniques in the creation and making of art works. Students are guided in forming and expressing opinions about their own artworks, as well as art within the wider local and global community. The meaning of artworks from a range of styles, times and cultures is explored, developing appropriate art vocabulary. Learning takes place both individually and collaboratively to develop creative, critical and reflective skills.

Topics

Over the course of Year 7, students are given the opportunity to generate ideas or generate responses to techniques, realise final artworks and respond to the artwork of their own and others.

The areas of study are:

- Painting
- Printmaking
- Sculpture
- Ceramics
- Drawing
- Textiles
- Art Theory.

Learning Activities

Creating and Making

- Manipulate art elements and principles to expressively communicate ideas
- Explore a range of media, materials and technologies including painting, print making, sculpture and textiles
- Investigate art forms from a range of times and places
- Demonstrate a confidence and awareness of their skills to enable them to better communicate their ideas.

Exploring and Responding

- Evaluate, interpret and respond to artworks from a range of styles, times, traditions and cultures
- Use appropriate skills and vocabulary to describe and express opinions about their own and others' artworks
- Explain their decisions about how they generate, develop and present artworks
- Evaluate and analyse the development of their skills and techniques.

Assessment

Assessment is an opportunity to enhance, empower and celebrate students' learning. Demonstrated Learning Behaviours will be assessed. This is determined by the following:

- Knowledge, understanding and interpretation of art works
- Annotations of inspiration, development of ideas and exploration of techniques
- Controlled use of media, skills and techniques.

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Year 7 Drama and Media Studies

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Students develop skills in shaping their drama and media products. They do this by exploring the many facets of drama such as mime, movement, performance and voice. Students also investigate different styles and eras of theatre to help increase their understanding of its history. Students experiment with ways in which stagecraft elements such as sound, set and costuming can be used and manipulated to create different effects. Students work individually and in groups, and develop class presentations by collaborating with each other to develop a given topic. Through discussion students learn to assess the effectiveness of drama and media in conveying intended meaning. In media, students create a variety of media products using digital video and software such as *Flash* and *Premiere*. Students are encouraged to use feedback from their peers as the audience in order to improve their own work.

Topics

- Mime and Movement
- Physicalisation and voice work
- Individual performance
- Group performance
- Analysing media products
- Digital video production.

Learning Activities

Creating, Making, Exploring and Responding

- Extend skills and knowledge in the use of drama and media elements in performances and media products
- Create scripts for development within performances
- Use improvisation to explore character and plot
- Develop an understanding of how to refine their work through rehearsal and collaboration
- Investigate theatre styles from earlier times and use the knowledge gained within performance work
- Respond to drama performances and media products from outside the classroom
- Respond to drama and media products from within the class
- Respond to peer performances and products
- Identify and discuss elements and techniques within drama performances and media products
- Respond to personal skill development within the two disciplines – drama and media

Assessment

- Before each assessment task, students are given the criteria for each task
- Use of the elements of physicalisation to help realise a performance
- Shaping and communication of ideas in both drama and media products
- Control of dramatic discipline within performance
- Use of story and production elements to create a media product
- Use of Drama Journal.

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Year 7 English

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In Year 7 English students study a range of texts, genres, read widely and explore themes and issues through their text study.

Students develop their skills in writing through planning, editing and producing a range of texts and using appropriate language to express their ideas and arguments.

Students develop their grammatical and language skills in the context of their writing and through specific grammar and comprehension units.

Students learn to speak to a range of audiences, sharing and discussing their ideas both formally and informally with a focus on public speaking and debating.

Topics

Texts studied (may be subject to change):

- *Hitler's Daughter*
- *Babe* (film)
- *Lost Diamonds of Killiecrankie*
- Creative writing
- Fables and folktales
- Spelling, grammar and comprehension
- Introduction to Shakespeare
- Short stories
- Poetry
- Legends, Myths and Mythology
- Debating
- Oral performance.

Learning Activities

- Grammar and language building tasks
- Oral discussion and presentations
- Comprehension questions
- Persuasive writing skills
- Creative letter and journal writing
- Essay writing
- Film analysis
- Online 'blog' tasks
- Multimedia story
- Wider reading (Library lessons).

Assessment

- Oral performance
- Book review
- Research poster
- Creative writing linked to texts
- Extension assignment
- Oral debates
- Historical short story
- Grammar test
- Coursework: a range of class work and homework tasks.

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Year 7 Geography

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Geography is the study of physical and human environments from a spatial perspective. It provides students with the knowledge and skills to observe and describe places on the surface of the earth and to analyse and provide explanations of human and physical phenomena and their complex interactions. Students' evolving understanding of their world provides a basis for evaluating strategies for the sustainable use and management of the world's resources.

Year 7 Geography ensures each student has a solid understanding of basic mapping concepts. Each unit of work throughout the year contains a mapping component. Students undertake the study of small units of work in the areas of natural environments, including endangered species, polar landscapes, desert environments and in the areas of sustainability.

Topics

Term 1:

- Geographical skills and mapping
- Toorak fieldwork

Term 2:

- Weather and water hazards

Term 3:

- World Geography
- Population, settlement types and culture

Term 4:

- Environments: Endangered Species.

Learning Activities

- Interpretation, analysis and evaluation of information from a range of sources including maps, graphs, tables, sketches, diagrams, multimedia and photographs
- Presentation of understanding in a variety of formats including visual, written, multimedia and oral
- Collaborative and cooperative learning
- Discussion, debate and role play activities
- Independent research and investigation
- Reports and extended responses
- Use of appropriate computer software
- Cartography, field sketching and surveying techniques
- Film and documentary analysis
- Enquiry based activities incorporating identification, observation, description, analysis, explanation, synthesis and evaluation.

Assessment

Applied and practical exercises

- Source analysis and evaluation
- Research activities
- Written responses
- Testing
- Oral and ICT supported presentations.

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Year 7 History – Ancient Civilisation

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Students develop a knowledge and understanding of ancient societies and their role in providing the foundations of modern society. This enhances students' knowledge and use of historical concepts and develops a broad historical map.

Students begin to use a variety of sources that record the features of these past societies.

They investigate daily life, the role and work of various groups, education, rituals and family. They explore the values and beliefs of societies through their religions, myths and legends and their social and political structures. Students examine the ways the culture was expressed through art, music, literature, drama, festivals and education. They learn about key events, significant individuals and the influence of trade and contact with other cultures.

Through their investigations, students develop their understanding of change and continuity over time, and the open-ended nature of historical inquiry.

Topics

- What is History?
- Ancient Egypt
- Ancient Greece
- Ancient India.

Learning Activities

- Comprehension and analysis of a range of sources
- Evaluation of sources
- Collaborative and cooperative learning
- Discussion and debate
- Independent research and investigation
- Presentation of understanding in a variety of formats including visual, written, multimedia and oral
- Effective writing, both shorter responses and essays
- Use of appropriate computer software to plan, store and present work
- Excursions and incursions, as appropriate to the issues under investigation.

Assessment

Source analysis and evaluation:

- Research activities
- Short answer, report and essay writing
- Film reviews
- Oral and ICT supported presentations.

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Year 7 Languages (Chinese)

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This course caters for non-beginners in the study of Mandarin Chinese. Through everyday topics students develop their knowledge of the writing script and system of tones and engage in simple conversations with each other.

They learn to read short passages effectively and write characters and sentences using appropriate conventions.

The students also learn about the geography, festivals and special events of China, make comparisons with Australia and learn why there are differences and similarities between languages.

Topics

- Greetings
- Introducing self and friends
- Classroom phrases
- Age
- Family
- Pets and animals.

Learning Activities

- Role plays
- Reading comprehension exercises
- Games and songs
- Self-paced computer activities
- Recognising and writing the Chinese characters
- Oral presentations
- Cultural activities and discussions
- Writing tasks.

Assessment

- Regular class tests
- Unit tests - oral, aural and written
- Performance in role plays and other class activities
- Writing tasks
- Project work
- Semester Test.

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Year 7 Languages (French)

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In this introduction to the French language, students become acquainted with aspects of France's rich culture and history and become more aware of the links between French and English.

They quickly learn to exchange information with each other, begin writing short paragraphs, perform role plays and participate in the Alliance Française Berthe Mouchette Competition.

Students who have previously studied French are catered for. In Semester 2, students continue to develop their language skills and apply them in 'authentic' situations.

Topics

- Greetings
- Family
- Talking about where you live
- Pets
- French festivals
- Talking about the weather.

Learning Activities

- Listening activities
- Role plays
- Reading comprehension exercises
- Games and songs
- Self-paced computer activities
- Writing short paragraphs
- Oral presentations
- Cultural activities and discussions
- Alliance Française Poetry Competition.

Assessment

- Regular vocabulary tests
- Unit tests
- Paragraph writing
- Project work
- Presentations and role plays
- Semester test.

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Year 7 Languages (Japanese)

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In this course, Year 7 students begin to understand and use Japanese within the world of their experience. They exchange simple personal information and the Japanese scripts are introduced. A system of learnt actions reinforces the new language patterns and provides added stimulation and enjoyment.

Students also learn about the geography, festivals and special events of Japan, make comparisons with Australia and learn why there are differences and similarities between languages.

Topics

- Basic greetings
- Asking and giving names, ages, telephone numbers and saying where you live
- Introducing yourself and friends
- Class instructions
- Japanese folk story
- Annual cultural events
- Introduction to Japanese script

Learning Activities

- Listening activities
- Role plays
- Reading comprehension exercises
- Games and songs
- Self-paced computer activities
- Recognising and writing the Hiragana script
- Oral presentations
- Cultural activities and discussions
- Writing short paragraphs.

Assessment

- Regular vocabulary and Hiragana tests
- Unit tests - oral, aural and written
- Performance in role plays and other class activities
- Writing tasks
- Project work
- Semester Test.

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Year 7 Mathematics

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Year 7 students work with increasingly general representations of material in each of the content strands of Number and Algebra, Statistics and Probability, and Measurement and Geometry.

The proficiency strands of Understanding, Fluency, Problem Solving and Reasoning are an integral part of the Mathematics content across all areas.

Topics

- Fractions, decimals and percentages
- Index notation
- Compare, order, add and subtract directed numbers
- Introduction to the use of variables and algebraic expressions
- The solution of simple linear equations
- The Cartesian plane and the transformation of points on the plane
- Two dimensional measurement
- Spatial relations
- Angles and polygons
- Equally likely outcomes and probability.

Learning Activities

- Skills practice in standard mathematical computations and routines
- Short answer analysis problems
- Longer answer application problems
- Skills practice in using technology: scientific calculators and computers
- Mathematical modelling
- Problem solving activities involving both individual and collaborative work.

Assessment

- Topic Tests involving multiple choice, analysis and application questions, partly calculator free
- Analysis and Application Tasks which require students to apply their mathematical knowledge to unfamiliar tasks
- Semester examinations.

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Year 7 Music (Combined with Year 8 Music)

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This course develops the students' individual understanding of the expressive qualities of music with a focus on playing, listening, composition and improvisation, aural analysis, singing and performance.

Contrasting musical styles are investigated, along with the relevant cultural, historical and social contexts.

Year 7 and 8 join for curriculum delivery in this subject. It is a two year course – Year 'A' and Year 'B'. 2012 is an 'A' year.

Topics

- Semester 1: Chinese/Japanese Music, including Taiko drumming
- Semester 2: Aboriginal and Contemporary Indigenous music.

Learning Activities

Creating and Making

- Compose and manipulate musical elements to express themselves through sound
 - Compose using computer software
 - Develop musicianship skills based on the instrumental/vocal program
 - Sing and play a range of repertoire in many styles related to the topics.
 - Develop performance skills through performances of the Combined Years 7 and 8 Choir, Concert Band or String Ensemble
- Explore a range of multimedia opportunities.

Exploring and Responding

- Listen and analyse a range of musical styles available within the topic
- Performance analysis of both live and recorded music
- Improvise in a range of keys, timbres and textures
- Music production and appreciation
- Singing/playing
- Performance presentation, Twilight Concerts
- Aural
- Composition
- Listening and analysis.

Assessment

- Assessment is based on performance activities and the presentation of a research/written activity
- Before each assessment task, the students are given formal criteria.

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Year 7 Personal Development

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Personal Development is a key part of the total development and education of the child. This subject focuses on developing students' awareness of themselves as individuals who take increasing responsibility for their own well-being and their relationships with others. Students learn about their own personal health, focusing on adolescent changes and challenges, making healthy food choices and developing positive relationships and values education.

They develop knowledge, skills and behaviours that enable them to maintain good health, live a healthy lifestyle, develop protective behaviours, work with others in teams, build positive relationships and manage and resolve conflict situations.

Topics

- Relationships
- Conflict resolution and developing resilience
- Puberty
- Hygiene
- Sun Safety
- Nutrition.

Learning Activities

- Integrated use of ICTs
- Independent and group research/ investigation tasks
- Collaborative and co-operative learning within a variety of settings
- Effective writing: shorter responses and essays
- Excursions and incursions.

Assessment

- ICT
- Classwork and discussion
- Problem solving
- Homework
- Assignments
- Video analysis
- Risk minimisation scenarios.

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Year 7 Physical Education

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Physical Education is a key part of the total development and education of the child. It encourages the learning and discovery of the human body and the benefits of physical activity for individuals and others in the wider community. Students experience a range of physical activities, sports and recreational activities which provide opportunities for relaxation, enjoyment, recreation, fitness, competition, social and cultural interaction in a diversity of environments. Involvement in physical activities, sports and recreation also assists the development of movement competence and fitness, provides challenges to groups and individuals, promotes growth, provides team work and leadership opportunities and allows discovery through play.

Topics

Students learn to participate safely in sporting activities and develop a broad appreciation of the benefits of physical activity. Students will participate in such activities as:

- Aquatics
- Hockey
- Netball
- Athletics
- Soccer
- Basketball
- Softball
- Gymnastics
- Badminton.

Learning Activities

- Students learn to participate safely in sporting activities and develop a broad appreciation of the benefits of physical activity
- Collaborative and co-operative learning within a variety of settings.

Assessment

- Perform motor skills proficiently in simple and increasingly complex skill development activities
- Identify strategies to encourage involvement in physical activity
- Develop motor skills which are appropriate to specific major games, activities and sports
- Develop initiatives and motivational influences that affect participation in physical activity
- Compare images of health and how these influence personal and community health goals and strategies
- Plan and implement strategies to promote personal and environmental health and safety.

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Year 7 Science

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Students are introduced to the core aspects of scientific thinking and skills to expand and apply their knowledge of science to familiar and new situations. They explore how scientific work has led to the discovery of new knowledge and understanding about the natural world and changed our understanding of ourselves and our future. Students develop an understanding of themselves as organisms composed of different cells, and the composition of those cells, as well as systems working together. They study the structure and function of plants and our solar system.

Subject to change with the introduction of the Australian Curriculum in 2012.

Topics

- Let's be Scientists
- Classification
- Cellular Biology
- Investigating Matter
- Separating Mixtures
- Plant Reproduction
- Forces in Action
- Skeletal Systems
- Third rock from the Sun (Solar System)
- Light and Sound
- Scientific Skills.

Learning Activities

- A range of laboratory investigations involving identification, preparation and separation of mixtures and solutions to develop skills in measuring and assigning appropriate units of measurements
- Design and perform controlled experiments and justify the selection of equipment, procedures, the type of data collected, and its relationship to the aim of the investigation
- Presentation of data in appropriate graphical form to represent relationships that exist between variables
- Report writing laboratory investigations
- Practise safe and responsible behaviour when conducting investigations using standard equipment and chemicals
- 'The Orang-utan Browse Plantation Project'. A student centred experience that provides students with the opportunity to plant and maintain, over the long-term, a plantation of browse plants, for use as bedding by primates at Melbourne Zoo
- Develop horticultural skills and identify relationships within the ecosystems through the ASTA SPECTRA Award.

Assessment

- Topic tests and quizzes
- Laboratory investigations including scientific diagrams
- Scientific skills including scientific method, student design and analysis of second hand data (incorporating ACER PAT Science Testing)
- Bunsen burner licence
- Laboratory licence
- Dr Van Goof student investigation
- Collaborative and individual assignments.

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Year 8 Art

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In Year 8, we use a range of starting points to generate and expressively develop real, imaginary and abstract ideas. Students are encouraged to extend their abilities to undertake deeper technical, aesthetic and conceptual investigations in visual media. They will use their observations of the world around them and the use of design elements and principles to manipulate visual representations to express ideas. Students are given the opportunity to explore and communicate ideas using a range of media, and technologies to develop skills and techniques in the creation of artworks.

Students are guided in forming and expressing opinions about their own artworks, as well as art within wider local and global communities. The meaning of artworks from a range of styles, times and cultures is explored, developing appropriate art vocabulary, individual systems of inquiry and also an understanding of their own capacity for self-expression and a sense of their preferred means of expressing creative ideas.

Topics

Over the course of Year 8, students are given the opportunity to *generate* ideas or *generate* responses to techniques, *realise* final artworks and *respond* to the artwork of their own and others. The areas of study are:

- Painting
- Printmaking
- Sculpture
- Ceramics
- Drawing
- Art Theory.

Learning Activities

Creating and Making

- Creatively manipulate art elements and principles to expressively communicate ideas
- Extend on the skills and techniques using a range of media, materials and technologies developed in Year 7
- Investigate art forms from a range of times and places
- Further develop confidence in, and awareness of, skills to enable better communication of ideas.

Exploring and Responding

- Evaluate, interpret and respond to artworks from a range of styles, times, traditions and cultures
- Extend appropriate skills and vocabulary in describing and expressing opinions about their own and others artworks
- Explain decisions about how to generate, develop, refine and present artworks for specific purposes and audiences
- Evaluate and analyse the development of skills and techniques.

Assessment

- Assessment is an opportunity to enhance, empower and celebrate students' learning. Demonstrated Learning Behaviours are assessed. This is determined by the following:

Art Production

- Use of visual diary to explore and develop ideas; and to trial media and techniques
- Controlled use of media, skills and techniques
- Final artworks
- Annotation using Visual Arts Language to describe influences, explorations, and development

Art Appreciation

- Introduction to understanding and interpretation of artworks including art terminology
- Introduction to some of the history of art.

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Year 8 Drama and Media Studies

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Students develop skills in shaping their drama and media products by exploring the many facets associated with them. Students experiment with ways in which stagecraft elements, such as sound, set and costuming, can be used and manipulated to create different effects.

Students also investigate different styles and eras of theatre to help increase their understanding of its history and learn to assess the effectiveness of drama and media in conveying intended meaning for different audiences. Students will also analyse different effects that can be created within a media product and then use this knowledge to create short films and edit them using *PremierePro*.

Topics

- History of dramatic performance across cultures
- Group performance
- Individual performance
- Exploring media genres
- Screenplay writing
- Short film making
- Acting for the screen
- Post-Production digital editing using *PremierePro*.

Learning Activities

Creating and Making

- Extend skills and knowledge in the use of drama and media elements in their performances and products
- Investigate theatre styles from earlier times and use the knowledge gained to inform their performance
- Create scripts and screenplays for development within performances
- Use improvisation to explore character and plot
- Develop understanding of how to refine their work through rehearsal and collaboration with others
- Use various creative sources to help the development of a performance or a media product.

Exploring and Responding

- Respond to drama performances and media products from outside the classroom
- Respond to drama and media products from within the class
- Identify and discuss elements and techniques within drama performances and media products
- Respond to their personal skill development within drama and media
- Explore and respond to drama and media presentations aimed at different audiences.

Assessment

- Before each assessment task students are given the criteria for each task
- Performance work and Drama appreciation through research activities
- Use of the elements of physicalisation to help realise a performance
- Control of dramatic discipline within performance
- Use of the story and production elements to create a media product
- Use of Drama Journal

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Year 8 English

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In Year 8 English students develop further the skills and writing genres they learnt in Year 7 English. The students study a range of texts, read widely and explore complex themes and issues through this study.

In Year 8 English there is more of an emphasis on essay writing, extended writing and independent learning tasks.

Students develop their skills in writing through planning, editing and producing a range of texts and using appropriate language to express and extend their ideas and arguments.

Students develop their grammatical and language skills in the context of their writing and through specific grammar and comprehension units.

Students learn to speak to a range of audiences, sharing and discussing their ideas both formally and informally with a focus on public speaking and debating.

Topics

Texts studied

(May be subject to change):

- *Mao's Last Dancer* – Asian Study
- *Bend it Like Beckham* (film)
- *Splinters* (short stories)
- *Flowers for Algernon*
- Writing in various styles
- Spelling, Grammar and Comprehension
- Historical context - China
- Short story genre
- Debating
- Oral performance.

Learning Activities

- Grammar and language building tasks
- Oral discussion and presentations
- Comprehension questions
- Creative writing – autobiographical and short stories
- Essay structuring and writing (TEEL)
- Negotiated task
- Film analysis
- Wider reading (Library lessons).

Assessment

- Creative responses linked to texts
- Wider reading tasks
- Oral presentations
- Short stories
- Text response essays
- Comprehension, grammar tests and tasks
- Coursework: a range of class work and homework tasks.

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Year 8 Geography

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Geography is the study of physical and human environments from a spatial perspective. It provides students with the knowledge and skills to observe and describe places on the surface of the earth and to analyse and provide explanations of human and physical phenomena and their complex interactions. Students' evolving understanding of their world provides a basis for evaluating strategies for the sustainable use and management of the world's resources.

Year 8 Geography ensures each student has built and consolidated their mapping skills and Spatial Concepts as taught in Year 7. Each unit of work throughout the year contains a mapping component. Students undertake the study of small units of work in the areas of natural environments; these include, volcanoes, natural disasters, weather and climate, south eastern Asia studies, population geography and coastal systems.

Topics

- Environmental: Biotic life
- Botanical gardens fieldwork
- Human: Settlements
- Richmond field study
- Agricultural systems
- Globalisation.

Learning Activities

- Interpretation, analysis and evaluation of information from a range of sources including maps, graphs, tables, sketches, diagrams, multimedia and photographs
- Independent research and investigation
- Presentation of understanding in a variety of formats including visual, written, multimedia and oral
- Collaborative and co-operative learning
- Discussion, debate and role play activities
- Effective writing, both short and extended responses
- Use of appropriate computer software
- Cartography, field sketching and surveying techniques
- Film and documentary analysis
- Enquiry based activities incorporating identification, observation, description, analysis, explanation, synthesis and evaluation.

Assessment

- Applied and practical exercises
- Source analysis and evaluation
- Research activities
- Written responses
- Testing
- Oral and ICT supported presentations.

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Year 8 History – Medieval History

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Students develop a knowledge and understanding of medieval European, Islamic and Chinese societies and their role in providing the foundations of modern society. Students explore key concepts of governance, democracy, the rule of law, justice, religion, culture and feudalism. Students use a variety of sources that record the features of these past societies. They investigate daily life, the role and work of various groups, the division of labour between men and women, education, ritual and family. They explore the value and beliefs of societies through their religion, myths and legends and their political and social structures. Students examine the way the culture was expressed through art, music, literature, drama, festivals and education. They learn about key events, significant individuals, and the influence of trade and contact with other cultures. Students explore the legacy of medieval societies for contemporary societies.

Topics

- The Western and Islamic World
- Medieval Europe (c.590-1500CE)
- The Asia - Pacific World
- Shogunate Japan (c.794 – 1867CE)
- Expanding Contacts
- The Spanish Conquest of the Americas (c.1492 – c.1572CE).

Learning Activities

- Comprehension and analysis of a range of sources
- Evaluation of sources
- Collaborative and cooperative learning
- Discussion and debate
- Independent research and investigation
- Presentation of understanding in a variety of formats including visual, written, multimedia and oral
- Effective writing, both shorter responses and essays
- Use of appropriate computer software to plan, store and present work
- Excursions and incursions, as appropriate to the issues under investigation.

Assessment

- Source analysis and evaluation
- Research activities
- Short answer, report and essay writing
- Film reviews
- Oral and ICT supported presentations.

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Year 8 Languages (Chinese)

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In Year 8 students continue to understand and use Chinese within the world of their own experience. They exchange simple personal information, talking about themselves in response to questions and learning to ask questions. The students continue to become familiarised with the Chinese writing system. They begin to read and write extended paragraphs, dialogues and speech scripts.

As students learn the language, they also learn about traditional Chinese culture. In the unit of pets they become familiar with the animals of the Chinese zodiac calendar. As they learn about food they also learn about traditional Chinese cuisine.

Topics

- Countries and nationalities
- Sports and hobbies
- School and friends
- Food.

Learning Activities

- Listening exercises
- Role plays
- Reading comprehension exercises
- Games and songs
- Computer activities
- Writing paragraphs
- Word processing in Chinese
- Oral presentations
- Film project
- Cultural activities including Chinese cooking.

Assessment

- Regular vocabulary tests
- Unit tests
- Performance in role plays and oral presentations
- Writing activities
- Project work
- Semester Test.

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Year 8 Languages (French)

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In Year 8 students continue to use French within the world of their experience.

They exchange simple personal information, talk about themselves in response to questions and learn to ask questions. They begin to write longer paragraphs, perform role plays and participate in the Alliance Française Berthe Mouchette competition.

The students learn more about the life of young people in France and in the Francophone world, making comparisons with their own experience.

Topics

- The weather
- Self and feelings
- Numbers and time
- Holidays
- School
- Directions
- Foods
- Meals in France.

Learning Activities

- Listening exercises
- Reading comprehension exercises
- Role plays
- Writing paragraphs and dialogues of some detail
- Computer programs which promote language acquisition through self-paced learning
- Alliance Française Poetry Competition
- Cultural activities and discussions.

Assessment

- Regular vocabulary tests
- Unit tests
- Performance in role plays and other class activities
- Paragraph writing
- Project work
- Semester Test.

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Year 8 Languages (Japanese)

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In Year 8 students continue to understand and use Japanese within the world of their own experience. They exchange simple personal information on every day topics, talk about themselves in response to questions and learn to ask questions.

The students continue to become familiarised with the Japanese writing system, focusing on the Hiragana script. Relevant Kanji characters are also introduced. They begin to write extended paragraphs, dialogues and speech scripts.

Students also learn about aspects of contemporary and traditional Japanese culture.

Topics

- Pets
- Weekend activities
- Anime (animation)
- Family
- Food
- Days of the week
- Transport.

Learning Activities

- Listening activities
- Role plays
- Reading comprehension exercises
- Games and songs
- Computer activities
- Writing paragraphs
- Word processing in Japanese
- Oral presentations
- Cultural activities including Japanese cooking.

Assessment

- Regular vocabulary tests
- Unit tests
- Performance in role plays and other oral presentations
- Writing activities
- Project work
- Semester Test.

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Year 8 Mathematics

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Year 8 students continue to develop their ability to manage the more abstract concepts in the Mathematics course. The proficiency strands of Understanding, Fluency, Problem Solving and Reasoning are an integral part of the Mathematics content across the three strands of Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry and Statistics and Probability.

Topics

- Directed number – carry out the four operations with integers using efficient mental and written strategies
- Number fields and the introduction to irrational numbers
- Index Laws – the use of index notation and index laws
- Algebraic notation and its use to solve linear equations
- The simplification of algebraic expressions and an introduction to factorisation and expansion
- Sketching linear expressions on the Cartesian Plane
- Measurement in two and three dimensions
- Triangles and the concept of congruence
- Data representation and interpretation.

Learning Activities

- Skills practice in standard mathematical computations
- Short answer analysis problems
- Longer answer application problems
- Skills practice in using technology: scientific calculators and computers
- Mathematical modelling
- Problem solving activities involving both individual and collaborative work.

Assessment

- Topic Tests involving multiple choice, analysis and application questions, partly calculator free
- Analysis and Application Tasks which require students to apply their mathematical knowledge to unfamiliar tasks
- Semester examinations.

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Year 8 Music (Combined with Year 7 Music)

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This course develops the students' individual understanding of the expressive qualities of music with a focus on playing, listening, composition and improvisation, aural analysis, singing and performance.

Contrasting musical styles are investigated, along with the relevant cultural, historical and social contexts.

Year 7 and 8 join for curriculum delivery in this subject. It is a two year course – Year 'A' and Year 'B'. 2012 is an 'A' year.

Topics

- Semester 1: Chinese/Japanese Music, including Taiko drumming
- Semester 2: Aboriginal and Contemporary Indigenous music.

Learning Activities

Creating and Making

- Compose and manipulate musical elements to express themselves through sound
- Compose using computer software
- Develop musicianship skills based on the instrumental/vocal program
- Sing and play a range of repertoire in many styles related to the Topics.
- Develop performance skills through performances of the Combined Years 7 and 8 Choir, Concert Band or String Ensemble
- Explore a range of multimedia opportunities.

Exploring and Responding

- Listen and analyse a range of musical styles available within the topic
- Performance analysis of both live and recorded music
- Improvise in a range of keys, timbres and textures
- Music Production and Appreciation
- Singing/playing
- Performance presentation-Twilight Concerts
- Aural
- Composition
- Listening and analysis.

Assessment

- Assessment is based on performance activities and the presentation of a research/written activity
- Before each assessment task, the students are given formal criteria.

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Year 8 Personal Development

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Personal Development is a key part of the total development and education of the child. This subject focuses on developing students' awareness of themselves as individuals who take increasing responsibility of their own wellbeing and their relationships with others. Students learn about their own personal health, focusing on body image and the portrayal of females in society, building and maintaining healthy relationships and problem solving in relation to risk taking behaviours and assessment. They develop knowledge, skills and behaviours that enable them to maintain good health, live a healthy lifestyle, develop protective behaviours, work with others in teams, build positive relationships and manage and resolve conflict situations.

Topics

- Relationships / Friends
- Peer pressure
- Bullying
- Conflict resolution
- Risk taking behaviours
- Cybersafety
- Women in Sport.

Learning Activities

- An integrated use of ICTs
- Independent and group research/ investigation tasks
- Collaborative and co-operative learning within a variety of settings
- Effective writing: shorter responses and essays
- Excursions and incursions.

Assessment

- ICT
- Classwork and discussion
- Problem solving
- Homework
- Assignments
- Video analysis
- Risk minimisation scenarios.

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Year 8 Physical Education

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Physical Education is a key part of the total development and education of the child. It encourages the learning and discovery of the human body and the benefits of physical activity for self and others in the wider community. Students experience a range of physical activities, sports and recreational activities which provides opportunities for relaxation, enjoyment, recreation, fitness, competition, social and cultural interaction in a diversity of environments. Involvement in physical activities, sports and recreation also aids in the development of movement competence and fitness, provides challenges to groups and individuals, promotes growth, provides team work and leadership opportunities and allows discovery through play.

Topics

Students participate in such activities as:

- Softball
- Athletics
- Hockey
- Badminton
- Indoor Soccer
- Gymnastics
- Netball
- Basketball
- Fitness testing
- Ball handling skills – hand/ eye/ foot
- Aerobics
- Year 8 Rowing Induction Program (at Powerhouse Rowing Club)

Learning Activities

- Students learn to participate safely in sporting activities and develop a broad appreciation of the benefits of physical activity
- Collaborative and cooperative learning within a variety of settings.

Assessment

- Perform motor skills proficiently in simple and increasingly complex skill development activities
- Identify strategies to encourage involvement in physical activity
- Develop motor skills which are appropriate to specific major games, activities and sports
- Develop initiatives and motivational influences that affect participation in physical activity
- Compare images of health and how these influence personal and community health goals and strategies
- Plan and implement strategies to promote personal and environmental health and safety.

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Year 8 Science

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Students revise measurement and size and relate this to atoms and sub-atomic particles. They learn to distinguish between atoms, elements, compounds and molecules. They use the Periodic Table to understand electronic configurations for a range of elements. Acids and Bases are introduced by studying the process of cheese making and making natural indicators. Chemical formulae are introduced and chemical reactions are written as word equations.

They develop an understanding of themselves as organisms composed of different cells and systems working together and explore the relationship between system failure and disease. They investigate disease at the cellular, tissue and human body levels.

Students are introduced to levers and gear systems to demonstrate the relationship between force and energy, and learn about the forces that are applied to maintaining a working bridge that can hold a load, by applying their knowledge and building their own bridge. Students describe the interactions between electrically charged objects, including a study of lightning.

Subject to change with the introduction of the Australian Curriculum in 2013.

Topics

- 'Up and Atom' (an introduction to Chemistry)
- Air in Us – Circulatory System and Respiratory System
- Compounds and Chemical Reactions
- Acids and Bases (incorporating cheese making)
- Simple Machines and Robotics
- Bridge Building
- Digestion
- Static Electricity
- Immunity
- Human Reproduction
- Scientific Skills.

Learning Activities

- Construct models to investigate Atomic structure
- Use experimental observations to identify compounds and record the changes as chemical reactions
- Investigate the properties of acids and bases through cheese making
- Describe the interactions between electrically charged objects
- Make models of different gear systems and report on their operation and applications
- Students design and conduct scientific investigations using their own robot, which they construct and program, in ways that lead to the collection, interpretation and presentation of valid data
- Design, construct and evaluate a bridge built from selected materials
- Students design and perform controlled experiments. They develop confidence in justifying their selection of equipment and procedures, the type of data collected, and its relationship to the question under investigation.

Assessment

- Collaborative and individual assignments
- Scientific skills including scientific method, student design and analysis of second hand data
- Laboratory investigations
- Topic tests.

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Year 7 and 8 Independent Learning Class

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Students in the Independent Learning Class (ILC) focus on learning how to work in an independent manner. Important skills, such as organisation, negotiation and academic perseverance are taught to ensure that the student becomes an effective learner and takes responsibility for much of her own learning. Students for this class are selected on their personal attributes related to their independence and capacity and interest in self-directed learning. This is not a class for all students, but is designed to cater specifically for a group of students who will respond positively to a rigorous learning environment that is more flexible and open to student designed learning.

A study of Learning Styles and the different types of approaches to learning is conducted throughout the year with the aim of students developing a deep understanding of their own learning processes and skills.

Students are taught English, History, Geography, and Science curriculum by ILC staff. They join the mainstream classes for Form and House activities, as well as all other subjects, including Languages and Mathematics.

Topics

Students in the ILC study the same topics that are listed in the mainstream curriculum for Years 7 and 8 Students. As enquiring and active learners, however, students in this class are also encouraged to develop a thirst for knowledge and relish their self-sufficiency, guided and supported in their independence by staff. Although the content is the same as mainstream classes, ILC students often have the opportunity to negotiate the method in which the curriculum is investigated.

Learning Activities

Students are given a weekly or fortnightly program which outlines their work requirements and provides a scaffold on which they can structure their activities. Students can, within some limitations, pace their activities and develop their own projects and learning plans within the set curriculum.

ILC students also complete an Independent Learning Project throughout the year. This may entail studying a topic they enjoy in more depth, joining a Tournament of Minds team or participating in a number of targeted extension activities.

Assessment

Students in the ILC are assessed on the same criteria as those students in a mainstream class, and this usually involves the same assessment tasks (tests, assignments and work requirements). There are occasions, however, where specific tasks and activities are structured to provide greater links with student skills and interests.

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Year 7 and 8 Intensive English Tuition

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The Year 7 and 8 Intensive English Tuition (IET) course is developed according to the needs of the students. Generally, the support consists of working with students formally and informally on their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.

At this level, students are developing an ability to communicate in a variety of styles. They read a range of basic texts, selecting strategies for interpreting these. Students write on topics that are familiar, using various stages of the writing process, from planning and drafting, to proofreading and editing, with a view to improving their fluency.

Furthermore, the IET sessions are designed to provide students with structured experiences in using oral English, and in listening comprehension, within the classroom.

Topics

- Language awareness - grammar, syntax, vocabulary and spelling
- Communication skills
- Learning skills
- Socio-cultural awareness

All year:

- *Grammar Practice 3*
- *Let's Write 3*
- *Let's Write 4*
- *English Mosaic 2*
- Other texts tailored to student needs, as required.

Learning Activities

- Ongoing journal
- Pair and group work
- Spelling, vocabulary and grammar
- Reading and listening comprehension
- Oral presentations
- Reading, viewing and studying a range of texts
- Tasks that enable students to develop increasingly complex written responses
- Using ICT to enhance learning.

Assessment

- Spelling, vocabulary and grammar tests as necessary
- Reading and listening comprehension
- Ongoing monitoring of all other class and homework
- Tests and other assessment tasks if, and when, required.

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