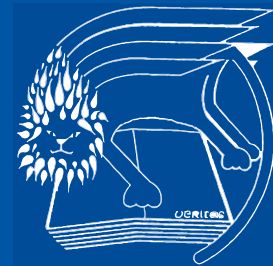


Ofsted  
Outstanding



**St Mark's Catholic School**



**Year 9  
Curriculum Booklet**

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## Introduction

Ofsted described the curriculum at St. Mark's as "outstanding". The Year 9 curriculum provides all students with the opportunity to fulfil their God given potential. Students study a broad range of subjects which promote their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development. Staff use a variety of teaching methods so that pupils can develop a range of learning styles. Lessons are differentiated to ensure that all students are challenged and make effective progress. Students develop a wide range of knowledge, skills and understanding during their first year at St. Mark's. Subject Departments are well resourced. There is a strong focus on literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum. Students are encouraged to be creative, to ask questions and to have high expectations of themselves. Homework is set on a regular basis and there is a whole school approach towards assessment and marking based on effort and attainment. There are also a range of extra curricular activities and trips which enhance learning across the curriculum.

At St Mark's Year 9 is divided into two half year blocks. In each block we have three Tutor Groups. The Tutor Groups are named after the Houses in the School. In one half we have Clitherow, Becket, More and in the other Pole, Fisher, Champion.

Clitherow, Becket, More follow Spanish while Pole, Fisher, Champion study French. Most subjects are divided into four groups in each half half year block with the exception of History, Geography, RE and Drama which are taught in forms.

Maths continues to set in Year 9. The sets are based on an internal test and the SAT information. Four groups exist in each half with the Foundation groups being much smaller. The department has regular opportunities for movement between the groups.



## Assessment

Apart from regular assessment of written and other work there are 3 major key assessments (1 per term), including an exam which is in the same format as the GCSE exam.

## Homework

Written work – short answers, essay

Research

Preparing presentations

Revision

## Study topics

The theme of the year is 'What does my faith mean to me?' Topics centre around Catholic beliefs and values, and include:

- Loving yourself and others
- Self respect and self esteem
- Equality and discrimination
- War and peace
- Pupils will also study the 'Judaism' unit of the GCSE course

## Skills

- analysis of texts & verbal opinions
- discussion / expression of beliefs and opinions
- interpretation of Biblical and other teachings
- ICT skills eg. research, power point, word, publisher
- presentation skills
- written literacy skills, including developing skills required for the GCSE course

## Resources

All materials are provided in class and / or via Show My Homework  
Web links are provided with individual tasks and assignments  
Homework is recorded on 'Show my homework'  
[www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) for Biblical texts

## Activities

RE staff accompany pupils on their Year 9 retreat

Possible visit to the Jewish museum / Synagogue

## Student View

"RE is by far my favourite subject. It has made me really think about my faith, therefore deepening it. I also now have a better understanding of life as a consequence of the 'moral issues' subjects. It's really engaging and enjoyable."

## Assessment

Class and home work is marked in relation to effort and attainment and in line with the school's assessment policy.

Pupils are assessed at the end of each unit on their completed final pieces. They evaluate their own progress and that of their peers prior to setting personal targets.

The body of work that is built up informs the Individual Monitoring Process and report writing.

## Homework

Homework is set once every two weeks and students continue to work in the sketchbook they were provided with in Year 7.

Homework tasks are set to inform work that is completed in class as well as reinforce learning. Types of homework could include:

- Research gathering and presenting information
- Taking photographs
- Collecting materials and resources
- Making drawings and studies in a range of media
- Planning ideas
- Practising and developing skills



## Study topics

- Drawing and printing; exploring the theme of Distortion through a range of different artists. Creating a multi coloured relief print.
- Mixed media; referencing the work of a range of artists in order to produce a piece of contemporary sneaker design. Here student's personal responses are a significant starting point with outcomes as diverse as sculpture, digital artwork and image transfer, drawing and painting and working with a pair of sneakers as a starting point.

## Skills

- Drawing and printing
- Mixed media

## Resources

[www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk) (The Tate Gallery)

[www.npg.org.uk](http://www.npg.org.uk) (The National Portrait Gallery)

[www.artchive.com](http://www.artchive.com)

[banksy.co.uk](http://banksy.co.uk)

[artandsoleblog.com](http://artandsoleblog.com)

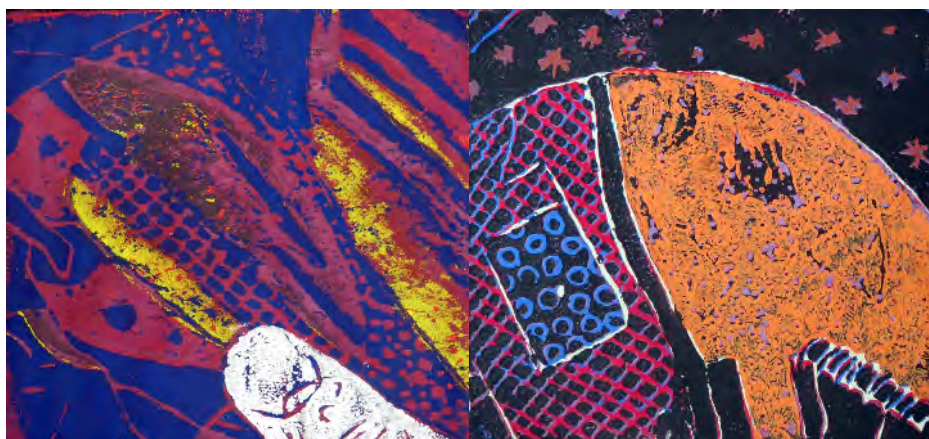
## Activities

Art Club runs weekly

Inter-house Art competition

## Student View

"We found Year 9 Art personal while making our own shoes and creative while making distortion prints. We feel that Year 9 Art really prepares us for the years to come."



# Computing



## Assessment

Students will be assessed in each of the three areas of computing:

Firstly, on-going basis in the lesson through self-evaluation, peer-evaluation and teacher feedback.

Secondly, mini-assessments they complete for homework every other week.

Thirdly, assessment at the end of each unit/project based on the completed piece of work they submit.

## Homework

Students will be expected to complete planning activities, questions and tests which will assess their understanding of lesson objectives. Homework will be set via the 'show my homework' website ([www.showmyhomework.co.uk](http://www.showmyhomework.co.uk)).

Students will also occasionally be asked to complete design work for homework.

Homework is set fortnightly and should take students between 20 and 30 minutes to complete.

## Study topics

The Computing department aims to provide students with a broad education that encourages creativity and equips them with the knowledge and skills to understand and change the world through the use of computing. Students will study the three strands of computing, as identified by the Royal Society; these are 'computer science', 'information technology' and 'digital literacy'. Our programmes of study in Year 9 include projects covering the following:

- Digital application creation
- Platform game creation
- Basic Programming

## Skills

- App development
- Game Development (Gamedemaker and Fireworks)
- Programming (Python)
- Computer Crime and Cyber Security

## Resources

<http://yearofcode.org/>

[www.codecademy.com/](http://www.codecademy.com/)

<http://www.codeavengers.com/>

[www.pythonschool.net/](http://www.pythonschool.net/)

## Activities

Computing rooms are available for students to use during break times, lunch times and after school with permission from a teacher.

## Student View

"Computing is great and I really like my lessons because we get to design and create our own apps. We also made a platform game, which was challenging but fun!"

# Design Technology

## Assessment

The two materials areas, Food & Nutrition and Product Design are run for half a year each split in to two 8-9 week blocks. The focus area and making skills are assessed at the end of each rotation based on levels. Students are asked to reflect on these levels alongside any written and verbal feedback they have received. The department follows the school assessment policy regarding the marking of class and homework

## Homework

Research topics include – designers; materials; function of ingredients; design movements; recipe ideas; videos supporting focus areas.



## Study Topics

Food & Nutrition - Skills based Food practical work and Cuisines from around the World

Product Design - Bug Jewellery and Earphone Wraps

Knowledge and Skills

### Food & Nutrition

Food Health and Safety

Adaption of recipes

High level food skills e.g. pastry making; sauce making; shaping foods; layering

History of food in the UK

Cultural impact of foods in the UK

Foods from around the world

### Product Design

CAD /CAM, Designing, Solving technical problems, Laser Cutting, Health and Safety, Evaluation, 2D design, Fusion 360, Workshop skills, Planning, Model making, Enamelling, Design communications

### Resources

Bitesize

Design Museum

[www.idsketching.com](http://www.idsketching.com)

[www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk)

Activities to support learning

Students are encouraged to cook at home and to practice their design communication skills

Watch Food based television programmes and videos on Design and Engineering

Find out how things are made; why materials/ingredients are used; how things work

Take responsible decisions regarding the use of ethically sourced ingredients / materials in their everyday lives

### Student View

“It is very interesting and it encourages me to think more creatively and independently”

# Drama

## Homework

Students will be set homework once every half term.



## Study topics

**Autumn Term:** Within this unit students will learn a duologue from Willy Russell's popular play 'Blood Brothers.' They will be assessed on their characterisation skills within this performance.

**Spring Term:** In the second term students will explore the history of theatre and the practitioners who have shaped theatre as we know it today. By studying Stanislavski, Brecht, and Artaud students will uncover different styles of theatre and create performances which reflect these styles. In the second half of the term students will explore the physical elements of Drama and the discipline of mask work.

**Summer Term:** During the last term students will have to opportunity to use their Drama skills to devise their own unique piece of Drama based on an event in history.

## Skills

Drama promotes language development. Its collaborative nature provides opportunities for pupils to develop key skills of communication, negotiation, compromise and self-assertion. Pupils develop confidence when speaking and their vocabulary is extended when they adopt roles and characters. Pupils also acquire a critical and subject-specific vocabulary through reflecting on and appraising their own work in drama and the work of others.

## Resources

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/drama/>

## Activities

School Musical

Shakespeare School's Festival

Key Stage 3 Drama Club

## Student View

"Drama allows me to be creative and to work in a practical way. I have really enjoyed learning about the history of theatre and being able to perform in the role of different characters. Drama has definitely given me a confidence boost."



## Assessment

### Reading:

- A critical essay on a character from 'A Christmas Carol'.
- A comparative poetry essay
- An unseen poetry exam
- **A critical essay on Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing***

### Writing:

- A piece of descriptive writing in the Gothic genre
- Experimenting with poetic styles such as dramatic monologues and sonnets
- Writing to argue within a variety of different forms such as formal letters and newspaper articles
- 

## Homework

Research. For example, students complete a series of creative research tasks on a Shakespeare play

Descriptive writing: Using powerful descriptive techniques, describe a character in 200 words.

Reading. Students are expected to do a wide range of independent reading and are expected to keep a reading log and be prepared to report back on their reading regularly.

## Study topics

Students study three units in Year 9 to work as a transition year in preparing them for the demands of GCSE. They are as follows:

### • **Victorian Literature**

In this Unit, students will study a great range of rich Victorian extracts and explore the key conventions of the era as well as the background and context. They will read the GCSE text 'A Christmas Carol' and write a critical essay on the presentation of Scrooge as a character. Students will also have an opportunity to study the Gothic genre in detail and create their own piece of Gothic descriptive writing.

### • **Poetry**

In this Unit, students will explore a rich range of poetry from the past 200 years as a way of achieving very important skills in being able to understand and analyse poems effectively. Through this unit they will also gain a good understanding of some of the poems they will study at GCSE, whilst developing their critical essay writing.

### • **Shakespeare's comedy**

The final unit of the year gives students an opportunity to delve into Shakespeare's comedy. With a main focus on their GCSE text, *Much Ado About Nothing*, students will study the characters, themes, context and background of the play. This unit also acts as a springboard for students to explore and study writing non-fiction texts for different purposes including, writing to entertain and writing to argue through a range of non-fiction mediums.

## Skills

- Skimming, scanning, predicting, inferring and deducting
- Analysing characterisation, plot structure and the way language is used to create mood and tone in novels and other fiction texts
- Writing critical poetry essays
- Writing a critical essay on a Shakespeare play
- Creating a range of non-fiction texts

## Resources

A Christmas Carol, a selection of extracts from classic Victorian texts, a variety of poems selected from pre and post 19th century including GCSE poetry, *Much Ado About Nothing*

## Activities

Book Week Competition- Create a book for children, understanding the purpose and form.

## Student View

"Year 9 was a fantastic year. It paved the way for GCSEs well by having lots of fun and engaging activities. I did not feel intimidated starting the GCSE course after this year"



# French

## Assessment

National Curriculum end of unit tests  
Levels 1-8 in listening, speaking,  
reading and writing.

Continuous informal assessment of  
all 4 skills.

## Homework

- Vocabulary and structure learning
- Matching exercises
- Display or poster work by hand or on computer
- Reading comprehension with exercises
- Writing about yourself
- Fronter-based work



## Study topics

**Media:** TV, going to the cinema, reading, friends, what you did last weekend  
The future: what are your plans for the weekend, what job will you do, what will you do later in life, using languages in life

**Health:** parts of the body, illness, healthy living, advice about staying healthy, keep-fit activities

**People:** French-speaking sportspeople, describing friends, a whodunit  
Normandy: learning about a region, arranging travel and hotel accommodation, visiting tourist attractions

**Young people's rights:** school in different countries, work, tackling hunger in the world, fair trade, human rights

## Skills

Listening, speaking, reading and writing are practised and developed each lesson, along with strategies for language learning.

## Resources

Expo 3 textbook and resources

[www.linguascope.com](http://www.linguascope.com)

[www.languagesonline.org.uk](http://www.languagesonline.org.uk)

[www.zut.org.uk](http://www.zut.org.uk)

## Student View

“Learning a language is good because if you go to that country you are able to speak to them and understand them. It’s good not to be clueless.”

“I think learning a language is good because when I go abroad I don’t have to be the typical English tourist, I would be able to speak their language. And it’s fun.”

# Geography

## Assessment

All verbal classwork contributions, written work, homework and key assessments contribute to the students' final key stage level and all students are encouraged to participate fully and actively in their learning.

Weekly homework set and grades awarded fortnightly.

Key assessments within each unit that stretch and challenge students and contribute to the end of key stage level.

All students are expected to keep a work record in their book that tracks progress through the academic year.

## Homework

Throughout the academic year, there will be a variety and balance of types of homework set. For example:

- researching key articles and retrieving data from websites
- written analysis of key questions
- writing reports
- annotating images, maps and other data
- producing storyboards of events
- watching clips



## Study topics

Natural Environments:

What is Biome and an ecosystem?

The Tropical Rainforest biome - structure, nutrient cycle, direct and indirect threats.

Sustainable Management

Natural hazards - tectonic, climatic - causes, impacts, management

## Skills

Develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places. Understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time.

Collect, analyse and communicate geographical information

Interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS).

Communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills.

## Resources

Key Geography 'Interactions'.

Phillips Modern School Atlas.

TV series such as: '10 Things you didn't know about....', 'The Living Planet', 'Amazon', 'Last Chance to See', 'Planet Earth', 'Planet Earth 2'.

[http://europa.eu/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/index_en.htm)

## Activities

Year 9 students are invited on the annual trip to Iceland. This is a fantastic opportunity for field study and to develop knowledge of volcanoes, waterfalls, coastal features, geothermal energy and Icelandic culture.

## Student View

"I enjoy learning geography and have chosen to take it further because I find the topics we learn about very interesting. The teachers are very helpful and easy to ask questions to, when stuck."

# History



## Assessment

- Homework will be set every week.
- In addition there will be 3 key assessments. These are spaced out throughout the year and address key historical issues at set points in the year. They are,
- Why was fighting on the Western Front such a new and terrible experience for British soldiers?
- How did the Nazis control the youth of Germany?
- Why did the Allies win World War Two?
- These key assessments will be marked by the class teacher and targets created by the students for the next piece of work.
- Records of the key assessments will follow the students through Years 7, 8 and 9. In Year 9 they will be used to determine whether they have achieved their key stage 3 target.

## Homework

- Key assessments
- Research tasks
- Essays
- Other written work
- Posters
- Displays

## Study topics

Was World War One inevitable?

Western Front research project

Why was agreeing a good peace so difficult in 1919?

How did the Nazis rise to power?

How did the Nazis stay in power?

Why is the Holocaust so significant in History?

Why did the Allies win World War Two?

GCSE preparation topic: Did the Romanovs deserve to die in 1918? Why was communism such a threat?

## Skills

Students will be able to understand the key events in the first half of the 20th Century.

They will be able to write well-structured and developed pieces of writing which answer key historical questions.

Students will analyse and evaluate a variety of different historical sources during Year 9. They will learn to judge reliability, to make inferences and to recognise different interpretations of events.

## Resources

BBC History

National archives

Modern Minds (The 20th century) text book

The Twentieth century text book

Rediscovering The Twentieth century world text book

Peace and War text book

## Activities

World War One battlefield trip

A whole day trip taking in the Western front area near Ypres in Belgium

## Student View

“I loved learning about the World Wars because I learnt about so many things I didn’t know about such as the Nazis and how the Nazis taught children in Germany.”

# Maths

## Assessment

Students complete an assessment every half term and are given a mark and a level.

They are provided with topic lists and revision materials from which to prepare for these assessments.

The progress of students is monitored throughout the year and set changes are made where appropriate.

## Homework

Homework is set twice a week.

One piece is an e-learning homework which can be accessed via <https://vle.mathswatch.co.uk/vle/>



## Study topics

- Number
- Algebra
- Geometry
- Statistics

## Skills

In Year 9, students develop their understanding of mathematics, and are given work at a level that not only challenges them and interests them, but ensures progress and a sense of achievement. All pupils are encouraged to reach their full potential and develop a sound numerical ability and a high level of confidence in problem solving. There is always extra help available to those who need it, and extension/enrichment material is assigned to enhance pupils' understanding of the underlying concepts. The aim is to provide excellent preparation for the study of GCSE maths.

## Resources

- [www.mymaths.co.uk](http://www.mymaths.co.uk)
- [www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks3bitesize/maths](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks3bitesize/maths)
- <https://vle.mathswatch.co.uk/vle/>
- [www.nrich.org](http://www.nrich.org)

## Activities

There are a number of activities and visits available for students including the Nationwide Mathematics' Challenge and opportunities for students to attend after school enrichment sessions.

## Maths Support Centre

The Maths Support Centre offers a space where students can get direct support after school. It also has computers where online Maths homework can be completed. All KS3 students are welcome to drop in and ask questions.

## Student View

"Maths has been so much fun and I have learnt so much since Year 8. Now I understand how Maths is used in Real life, I especially liked the Architecture challenge."

# Music

## Assessment

Each topic is assessed through performance, composition and written tasks.



## Study Topics:

- Reggae
- Minimalism
- Britpop
- Dance Music
- Film Music

## Skills:

### Students will:

- Develop their performing skills by learning how to play instruments accurately and fluently.
- Develop their compositional skills by learning how to improvise and compose by drawing on a range of musical structures, styles and features.
- Identify and use musical vocabulary accurately and confidently
- Develop their knowledge of musical notation and basic harmony
- Develop their understanding of the history of music and how music has evolved through the ages
- Learn how to use music technology to develop their performance and musical skills

## Resources:

- 2 large classrooms with keyboards
- 25 macs with Logic, Garageband and Sibelius
- 5 practice rooms with keyboards and drum kits
- a selection of electric and bass guitars
- a recording studio

## Activities:

- Upper School Choir
- String Group
- Orchestra
- Musical productions
- Concerts

## Assessment

Students are assessed in line with National Curriculum Levels in each activity in order to form an overall level for the end of year assessment.

## Homework

Research tasks

Further reading

Analysis of performance

Practicing skills at extracurricular clubs or at weekends



## Study topics

Invasion Games, Net Games, Fitness, Gym, Striking and Fielding Games and Athletics

## Skills

Pupils select and combine skills, techniques and ideas and use them in a widening range of familiar and unfamiliar physical activities and contexts, performing with consistent precision, control and fluency. They use imaginative ways to solve problems, overcome challenges and entertain audiences. When planning their own and others' work, and carrying out their own work, they draw on what they know about strategy, tactics and composition in response to changing circumstances, and what they know about their own and others' strengths and weaknesses. They analyse and comment on how skills, techniques and ideas have been used in their own and others' work, and on compositional and other aspects of performance. They suggest ways to improve. They understand how the different components of fitness affect performance and explain how different types of exercise contribute to their fitness and health. They describe their involvement in regular, safe physical activity for the benefit of their health and wellbeing.

## Resources

- BBC Sports Academy
- Top Sport
- National Governing Body Websites

## Activities

The Physical Education Department runs many after school clubs which travel and play in a variety of school fixtures in the local area and across the county and region.

The department also runs popular Ski trips to Austria and a Football Tour to Valencia

## Student View

"I enjoy my PE lessons in Year 9 as I really can develop my skills in each activity as I build towards GCSE PE further up the school"

# Science

## Assessment

Students are assessed formatively at the end of each topic. Summative assessments take place at the end of each term. **Homework**

Research

Extended reading/writing tasks

Creating presentations and reports

Creating models

On line based Homework



## Study topics

**Biology** – Genetics, inheritance and evolution. Anatomy, physiology and digestion.

**Chemistry** – Chemical reactions and energy changes. Industrial chemistry and the environment.

**Physics** – Space. Forces and Motion.

In the summer term students complete an introduction into the GCSE Science Course - completing a short Biology, Chemistry and Physics topic

## Skills

The principal focus of science teaching in key stage 3 is to develop a deeper understanding of a range of scientific ideas in the subject disciplines of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Pupils should begin to see the connections between these subject areas. By the end of Year 9, students should have developed their understanding of the fundamental principles so they can thrive at key stage 4.

## Resources

- CPG revision guide
- CPG workbook
- BBC bitesize - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks3/>
- Doodle - <https://www.doodlelearn.co.uk/>

## Activities

Stem Club

BP Young Engineers' Challenge

## Student View

“Science this year has made me question the world around me and learn more about topical and current issues such as drugs and genetics. Outside of the usual curriculum I was given the opportunity to partake in STEM club which allowed me to further develop my scientific skills and knowledge. Overall my experiences this year have been very positive and have given me the confidence that I am well equipped for Year 10 GCSE science.”

# Spanish



## Assessment

National Curriculum end of unit tests  
Levels 1-8 in listening, speaking,  
reading and writing.

Continuous informal assessment of  
all 4 skills.

## Homework

Vocabulary and structure learning

Matching exercises

Display or poster work by hand or on  
computer

Reading comprehension with  
exercises

Writing about yourself

Frontier-based work

## Study topics

**Media:** computer use, TV, films, music, going to a concert

School: describing school, daily routine, plans for next year, school rules,  
detailed descriptions

**Health:** parts of the body, illness, healthy and unhealthy food, healthy living,  
making resolutions and lifestyle changes

**Work:** earning and spending money, what you would like to do, jobs, using  
languages, if you won the lottery

**Spanish-speaking world:** Central and South America, environmental  
problems, working conditions and fair trade, famous people

Visiting a Spanish family: introductions, buying train tickets, visiting a town

## Skills

Listening, speaking, reading and writing are practised and developed each  
lesson, along with strategies for language learning.

## Resources

- Mira 3 textbook and resources
- [www.languagesonline.org.uk](http://www.languagesonline.org.uk)
- [www.zut.org.uk](http://www.zut.org.uk)
- [www.espanol-extra.co.uk](http://www.espanol-extra.co.uk)

## Student View

“I enjoy languages because it is interesting to learn different ways of  
communicating with other people.”

“Learning 2 languages is good because it helps you experience different  
cultures and can also develop your skills such as a good memory. It could  
also help you in future careers.”





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