

St Mark's Catholic School



Year 8 Curriculum Booklet

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Introduction

Ofsted described the curriculum at St. Mark's as "outstanding". The Year 8 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 8 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, Campion.

Clitherow, Becket, More follow Spanish while Pole, Fisher, Campion study French. In RE, History and Geography the pupils are taught in Tutor Groups; however, for certain subjects the Tutor Groups are divided into four groups enabling smaller group sizes. This happens in Maths, Science, Computing, Music, Technology, Art, PE and Languages.

Maths continues to set in Year 8. 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 assessment of class work and weekly homework there are three key assessments, one in each term, which the whole of Year 8 do. These are levelled according to set criteria. They include:

- A film review of 'The Prince of Egypt'
- A letter about Jewish life
- A Year 8 exam

There are also opportunities for self-assessment and peer assessment.

Homework

- Research
- Poetry
- Art eg. posters, storyboards
- Preparing power point presentations
- Creating videos
- Creating information booklets
- Extended writing



Study Topics

The theme for the year is 'This is where my faith comes from.' We look at the origins of our Catholic faith in the Old Testament and in Jesus' teachings in the Gospels. We also study the growth and spread of the Church as well as looking at the lives of the Saints. Judaism also forms part of our Year 8 curriculum.

Skills

- Reflecting
- Presenting
- Discussing and debating
- Literacy skills
- Evaluation / criticism of beliefs and opinions
- Peer assessment
- Self assessment
- Researching

Resources

Resources are provided in class and via Show My Homework

<http://www.biblegateway.com>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion>

Activities

Residential trip to Rome

We run a competition whereby pupils design a Christmas stamp with a Christian message.

Student View

"In RE I enjoyed learning as we were active in the lesson. We were taught in different ways which made the lessons more fun and interesting."

"I have been able to enhance my learning in RE through a range of different activities; drama, reading, debating, songs and speeches. This has allowed me to improve my relationship with God and understand him and his messages better."

Assessment

Class and home work is marked in relation to effort and attainment and in line with the schools 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.

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
- Webquest tasks
- Planning ideas
- Practising and developing skills



Study topics

Painting and drawing; exploring the theme of Portraiture through a range of different artists. Creating a self portrait using an extended colour range.

Ceramics; further developing skills using hand building techniques. Looking at animals as a resource and researching Picasso's zoomorphic pots before designing and making a 3D ceramic sculpture.

Mixed media; referencing the work of a range of artists in order to produce a mixed media piece using drawing and collage. The Environment as a theme.

Skills

- Drawing and painting
- Hand built ceramics
- Mixed media

Resources

http://nmolp.tate.org.uk/webquests/launch.php?webquest_id=4&partner_id=tate

www.tate.org.uk

www.npg.org.uk

Activities

Art club runs weekly.

Inter-house Art competition

Student View

"My time in Art has been amazing. I was able to express myself doing fun things. I never thought I would have done and now my art work is on display"

"I have enjoyed my time in Art this year and I have overachieved my target and improved my artistic knowledge and skills."

Computing

Assessment

Pupils will be assessed in three areas of Computing.

Firstly the mini-assessments they complete for homework every other week.

Secondly, pupils are assessed at the end of each unit/project based on the completed piece of work they submit.

Finally, pupils will complete an end-of-year assessment in the form of a series of online questions.

Homework

Homework will be internet-based via Fronter.

Pupils will be expected to complete questions which will test their understanding of lesson objectives.

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

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



Study topics

We aim to provide students with a well-rounded, challenging environment where students can develop their planning, designing, digital literacy, programming, evaluation and problem solving skills. This gives the students the opportunity to improve their computing skills as well as developing skills that will benefit other subject areas. Projects include:

- Virtualisation with Flow Diagramming
- Animation
- Game Development
- Creative Websites and HTML Basics
- Programming Basics

Skills

- Game Development (Gamedesigner)
- Website Development
- Multimedia & Graphics (Adobe Fireworks/Flash)
- Programming (Python)
- Problem Solving, Design, Planning, Organisation, Evaluating, Numeracy and Literacy

Resources

www.yoyogames.com/gamemaster

www.wix.com

www.codecademy.com/

Activities

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

Student View

"I like ICT because it makes using Computers worthwhile. It shows me how to solve problems and be flexible when using different software. It makes the lessons really fun. I have especially enjoyed making my own website and learning to code using HTML."

Design Technology

Assessment

The three materials areas, Food & Nutrition, Product Design and Textiles are each taught for a term on a rotation basis. The focus area and making skills are assessed at the end of each rotation based on SKIPS developed for each area. Students are asked to reflect on these SKIPS 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; ethical issues.



Study Topics

Food & Nutrition – Canteen Cuisine

Product Design – Clock

Textiles – Natural History Museum T-shirt

Knowledge and Skills

Food & Nutrition

Food Health and Safety,

Adaption of recipes,

Practical skills e.g. sauce making; combining ingredients; layering; bread making; dishes from different cultures

Fatal four – too much fat, sugar, and salt; not enough fibre

Product Design

CAD /CAM
Evaluation

Designing
2D design

Laser Cutting
Workshop skills

Health and Safety
Modelling

Textiles

CAD/CAM

Printing

Designing

Modelling

Embellishment Techniques – embroidery and appliqué

Quality control

Resources

Bitesize

Design Museum

Natural History Museum

www.idsketching.com

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

I have completed two of the projects. In Food we made a different dish every week which developed my practical skills. I enjoyed the designing of my clock and then seeing it coming together when we made it. I am now looking forward to learning new skills in Textiles"

Drama

Assessment

Students are assessed at the end of each unit on a practical performance related to the work they have been exploring. Students are also formally assessed each lesson on their ability to develop ideas and evaluate performance.

Homework

Students are required to complete one homework task every half term. These tasks range from learning lines, creating story boards and evaluating their work.



Study topics

- Physical Theatre
- The Seven Deadly Sins
- Genre
- Reality TV
- Oppression
- Duologues

Skills

- Team work
- Confidence
- Problem solving
- Performance
- Technical
- Public Speaking
- Evaluating
- Creativity

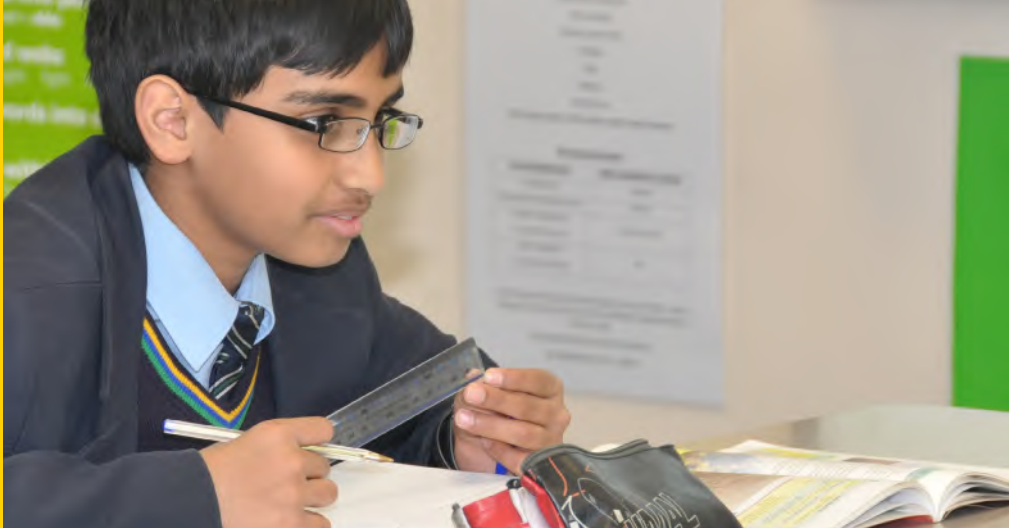
Resources

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/drama/

Activities

- There is a Key stage 3 Drama clubs that runs after school one day a week.
- The school musical

Student View



Assessment

Reading:

- A critical essay on a Shakespeare play
- A comparison poetry essay
- A close analysis of a character's development in a novel
- A commentary analysis of a piece of non fiction writing

Writing:

- Writing a formal letter
- Writing a short story
- Sonnet writing
- Writing a Travel Brochure

Homework

Research. For example, students complete a series of creative research tasks on William Shakespeare or his plays.

Creative Writing. Students create their own poetry anthologies and experiment writing descriptive writing pieces for different settings.

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 four units in Year 8 during the course of each assessment they complete three formal assessments. The units are as follows:

Shakespeare

Students will study from a choice of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' or 'Macbeth' studying the play through many engaging activities and performances. Students will push their analytical skills by analysing more challenging themes and even looking into the context and background of the plays

Poetry

Students will study some challenging yet engaging poems through this unit looking very closely at the work of Carol Ann Duffy and Simon Armitage. They will explore how engaging characters are formed through poems such as 'Havisham', 'Medusa' and 'The Hitcher'. The unit encourages to explore new and more complex poetic techniques and ideas whilst keeping them excited and enthusiastic about poetry

Writing to persuade/advertise

This unit pushes students to look at a variety of non-fiction texts with a specific focus on that of writing to persuade and advertise. Students will explore travel brochure, travelogues, travel guides, reviews and begin to understand how to adapt writing to achieve different purposes. This will lead students into creating their own piece and an accompanying commentary explaining their writing choices.

Skills

- Story writing, skimming, scanning, predicting, inferring and deducting
- Analysing characterisation, plot structure and the way language is used to create mood and tone in novels and short stories
- Writing critical poetry essays
- Non-fiction writing techniques in advertising and informative texts
- Grammar, spelling, punctuation and paragraphing

Resources

Of Mice and Men, Animal Farm, Macbeth, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Carol Ann Duffy and Simon Armitage's poetry, a variety of non-fiction texts in the theme of travel.

Activities

- Short Story Competition
- Poetry Live sessions on National Poetry Day
- Book Week Competitions
- Balloon Debates

Student View

"We've done so many things in English this year. One of my favourite topics was when we got to create our own holiday island in teams. We then learnt about advertising and persuasive language techniques and had to give a speech to the class. I felt like I was on The Apprentice when I gave mine! Sadly I didn't win, but it was great fun!"

French

Assessment

National Curriculum end of unit tests
Levels 1-6 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

My family and where I live: talking about family, jobs, where people live, weather, describing a typical day.

Free time: activities you like, last weekend, TV programmes you have watched.

Going out: invitations, making excuses, clothes, shops and shopping.

Food and drink: talking about food, mealtimes, preparing for a party, eating at a restaurant.

Holidays: countries and languages, holidays, holiday activities, a past holiday, holiday experiences

Pupils who have shown a high level of ability in languages will learn a second language.

Skills

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

Resources

Expo 2 textbook and resources

www.languagesonline.org.uk

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

Homework set each week, graded for effort and attainment every 3 weeks. This builds up a "Record of Work" in students' exercise books to inform the Individual pupil monitoring process and report writing.

Homework

- Written work – description and analysis, annotating photos, extended writing.
- Graphical work – sketches, drawing.
- Research work – from researching facts to in depth research for a piece of assessment.



Study topics

- Coastal and Coastal Management
- Environmental Concerns
- The Future of Antarctica
- Kenya and Development Studies

Skills

- Map Skills – grid references, symbols, distance, direction
- Enquiry Skills
- Literacy
- Sense of Place
- ICT skills – research and presentation
- Visual understanding
- Verbal Skills – ability to respond to and ask questions

Resources

- Key Geography "Connections"
- Atlas (book or online)
- BBC
- CIA World Factbook
- Meteorological Office
- YouTube
- The Blue Planet and Blue Planet II

Student View

"In Year 8 I enjoyed learning about Antarctica. There is so much to find out and the activities are be really interesting. I also enjoyed learning about wildlife and endangered species, as you get to make a Powerpoint presentation with your friends of an animal of your choice!"

"I enjoyed the coast unit where we got to create a model of a cave, arch, stack and stump."

History

Assessment

- Homework will be set every week.
- In addition there will be 2 key assessments. These are spaced out throughout the year and address key historical issues at set points in the year. They are,
 - Was Charles I to blame for the Civil War?
 - Explain why life as a slave was so terrible and offered little chance of escape?
- These key assessments will be marked by the class teacher and targets created by the students for the next piece of work.
- End of Year 8 exam. This exam will focus on one of the topics from Britain 1750-1900. Students will have to develop revision skills in preparation.

Homework

- Key assessments
- Posters
- Displays
- Role play preparation
- Game creation
- Essays
- Other written work
- Poems
- Research tasks



Study topics

- Britain 1603-1660 : The English Civil War and Oliver Cromwell
- Britain 1750-1900: Empire, Slavery and Industry.
- The Aztecs: Native Americans

Skills

- Students will be able to understand the key events in the three periods studied
- They will be able to write well-structured and developed pieces of writing which answer key historical questions.
- Students will analysis and evaluate a variety of different historical sources during Year 8. They will learn to judge reliability, to make inferences and to recognise different interpretations of events.
- In class there will be scope for discussion and debate.
- All students will have the chance to undertake more independent work using resources in school and at home.
- Students will be encouraged to come to their own conclusions on historical questions from the work they have done at home and in class.

Resources

- BBC History
- National archives
- Minds and Machines (1750-1900) Textbook
- Rediscovering Britain 1750-1900 Textbook
- Peace and War Textbook

Student View

"I think that it is important to know about the history of our country and we learn about it in a fun way."

"History in Year 8 has been amazing as we get the opportunity to learn about different topics."

"I enjoy the topics as they are fascinating and fun to learn about"

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 weekly.

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



Study topics

- **Autumn Term**
 - Angles
 - Algebra 1
- **Spring Term**
 - 2D Shapes
 - 3D Shapes
- **Summer Term**
 - Number
 - Transformations and Loci

Skills

Exposure to problems of an appropriately challenging nature encourages students to think and communicate mathematically, precisely, logically and creatively. Mental strategies are reinforced throughout so that students develop a sound numerical ability, and are able to recall mathematical facts, make estimations, and use visual imagery. The students will be encouraged also to develop basic algebraic, geometrical and data handling skills.

Resources

- www.mymaths.co.uk
- www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks3bitesize/maths
- <https://vle.mathswatch.co.uk/vle/>

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 this year compared to last year was so different you learn more in year 8 and have lots of fun using your mind to figure problems which are hard but the key is to think outside the box "

Music

Assessment

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



Study Topics:

- Blues
- Rock and Roll
- Ground Bass
- Folk Music
- Musical Theatre

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:

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

Assessment

The Year 8 curriculum builds on the Subject Key Indicators of Performance (SKIPs) from Year 7 where students are challenged to take the skills they have learnt and apply them in semi competitive situations and games. The wide ranging curriculum allows students to develop their performance across a range of activities where they will need to select and apply appropriate skills relevant to the situation they are in. Students are encouraged to participate in many of the school clubs available to them or pursue an activity they enjoy outside of school. Students are then assessed against Subject key Indicators of Performance (SKIPs)



Study topics

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

Skills

The Year 8 curriculum builds on the skills practiced and learnt in Year 7. Pupils select and combine skills, techniques and ideas and apply them accurately and appropriately in different physical activities, When performing in different physical activities, they consistently show precision, control and fluency. They show that they can draw on what they know about strategy, tactics and composition to produce effective outcomes. They modify and refine skills and techniques to improve their performance and adapt their actions in response to changing circumstances. They analyse and comment on skills, techniques and ideas and how these are applied in their own and others' work. They explain how the body reacts during different types of activity, and why physical activity is an essential component of a healthy lifestyle. They plan, organise and lead practices and activities safely, helping others' to improve their performance. (Physical Education National Curriculum)

Resources

BBC Sports Academy (via the BBC sports website)
Any relevant coaching book / website

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 having three lessons of PE in Year 8 as it allows me to do more activities that I enjoy and practice my skills. I look forward to extra curricular clubs as many take place and they are a lot of fun."

Science

Assessment

Teachers mark work regularly and targets are given as to how students can improve their work.

Many activities are designed so students can assess their own understanding of a topic, including self and peer assessment tasks. Students sit end of term modular exams at Christmas, Easter and Summer. Each student is awarded grade for their exam and their achievement is compared to the Science Key Indicators of Performance so that they can easily map their progress throughout the year.

Students reflect on their learning after each end of term exam by setting themselves specific targets to improve in the next assessment.

Homework

A range of homework activities are used in Year 8 so as to build upon the work done in class: research of a topic for the next lesson, preparing talks for role plays or completing specific sections in their work book.



Study topics

Biology: Life Support, Health & Microbes, Plant Nutrition

Chemistry: Elements, Compounds & Mixtures, Metals & Materials, Earth Sciences

Physics: Heating & Cooling, Light, Sound

Skills

The study of science fires students' curiosity about phenomena in the world around them and offers opportunities to find explanations. Science at Key Stage 3 links student's practical experience with scientific ideas. Experimentation and modelling are used to develop and evaluate explanations. Through this we encourage critical and creative thought.

Students learn how knowledge and understanding in science are rooted in evidence. They discover how scientific ideas can lead to technological change – affecting industry, medicine and improving quality of life.

Resources

Each student is issued with a Lonsdale Key Stage 3 Revision Guide and Workbook.

Useful websites include:

- www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks3/science
- www.docbrown.info/ks3science.htm

Activities

Students can join the weekly Science Club which carries out a full range of fun science experiments.

Each year, students can take part in Science Week activities which include "Bangs and Explosions" and dissections.

Student View

"I have enjoyed Science this year. I love the Bunsen burner work and the experiments. Also, I have really enjoyed the class discussions and the interactive work."

Spanish

Assessment

National Curriculum end of unit tests
Levels 1-6 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

People: activities, describing friends, celebrities, everyday routine, nationalities.

Going out: places in town, present and future tenses, invitations, making excuses, talking about likes and dislikes.

My holidays: where you went on holiday, travel, what you did, more details and use of past tense

Food: mealtimes, shopping for food, eating at a restaurant, a special meal, food you like and dislike.

Fashion: clothes, school uniform and opinions, fancy dress.

Barcelona: what there is to see and do, different types of shops, directions, describing a holiday in Barcelona

Skills

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

Resources

Mira 2 textbook and resources
www.languagesonline.org.uk

Student View

"Learning two 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."

"Learning languages is good because you can learn about more than one culture, and it helps with my English grammar as well."



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