



Year 8

# Curriculum News

Spring Term 2012

Welcome to the Spring Term Curriculum Newsletter. The departments that teach your child have contributed to the newsletter to give you information about what you can expect your child to be studying this term at St Mary's Catholic School.

Year 8 **R.E.** pupils study how Christianity came to Britain. They also consider the lives of Saints Alban, Columba, Aidan, Augustine and Bede. Pupils will cover aspects of the early Celtic Church and monasticism, particularly at Scarrig Michael off Ireland. In addition, they will be considering Holy Week events with a close examination of Palm Sunday, reasons why Jesus came into conflict with the authorities, the last supper, arrest and crucifixion, the case of the missing body and Easter Sunday.

Year 8 **English** Now for a Novel – Pupils will be reading, analysing and exploring a novel of the teacher's choice. Key outcomes vary according to the text studied but will all contain elements of literary analysis. In addition to studying the novel the pupils will have a chance to pep-up their private reading – please ensure that your son/daughter is reading at home.

In Year 8, **Maths** – pupils will be working across all four strands of mathematics: number, algebra, geometry and statistics. The topics they will be studying include area and volume, ratio, probability and constructing and solving equations. Towards the end of half term subject teachers will be writing their reports on Year 8 pupils. Assessment points at the end of each half term will indicate current level and progression.

In **Science**, Year 8 pupils will be studying numerous topics from all areas of science, which include: Magnets, Metal Reactions, Environment and Light. They will continue to develop their practical skills during these lessons in conjunction with these topics.

In Year 8 **Art** there will still be a strong emphasis on drawing. Pupils will also be encouraged to explore new techniques, such as printmaking and sculpture. Pupils will learn about Non Western artistic traditions and will be able to link these cultural references with work completed in other subject areas, such as Music.

For enthusiastic Art pupils we will be running a Key Stage 3 Club afterschool on Tuesdays.

In **D & T** all Year 8 pupils will continue developing their current projects allocated to this year group. The projects being attempted by pupils will be from a range that includes: a utensil holder in **Resistant Materials** and a souvenir in **Textiles**. In **Food**, pupils will study multicultural foods. There are exams this term which will be based on the work covered in Textiles or Product Design. Unfinished projects can be completed after school on Mondays for any pupils who wish to attend.

**Drama:** All correct except for Year 8 which is;

#### Peer Pressure

This project looks at the influence of peer groups and the possible consequences of peer group pressure. The performance at the end of the project is about someone who is persuaded to do something wrong. The drama is presented as a mixture of freeze frames and improvisation.

The aims are to:

- enable students to see how situations develop and how people can react
- develop a range of drama techniques
- help students develop an understanding of structure and character
- provide opportunities for group work.

By the end of this project, students are expected to:

- be able to work in a variety of groupings
- understand and use appropriate drama techniques
- understand the consequences of actions
- have developed confidence for performance
- have developed rehearsal skills.

In **Geography**, Year 8 pupils have so far studied the impacts of changes in countries' population structures and the knock-on effects on resource management. They have also looked into the reasons and consequences of migration. They are now investigating the global fashion industry, finding out about the interdependence between people, places and environments and developing their understanding of the concept of globalisation.

In Year 8 **Historians** are now moving through their study of Britain 1500 – 1750 and are studying a range of topics from the return of the Monarchy in 1660, the discovery of the New World and Witchcraft and many more. As the term progresses, we will prepare for examinations and then move our study to Britain 1750 – 1900.

In **ICT** this term our Year 8 pupils are continuing with Unit 8.2 of the Modified National Strategy ICT Scheme. They are creating a website which can be looked at by people in 30 years time, telling them what life is like for young people today. In the project, pupils learn to use effective techniques to find information from different sources, learn instances of HTML web design language and use Adobe Dreamweaver to create, design and link web pages and create web graphics using Adobe Fireworks. Pupils learn to find information from different sources, to present their ideas using web design skills and develop skills which can be transferred to GCSE courses.

**MFL** - The Year 8 **French** pupils are studying the topics of celebrations and festivals (with particular focus on Christmas) as well as the topic on school, endeavouring to consolidate the use of tenses (present/past/future). Students have the opportunity to use site like [Zut.org.uk](http://Zut.org.uk) to further their listening and reading skills. Help at lunchtime or after school is also available to them, should they feel unsure about anything.

Year 8 pupils work on a scheme exploring mystery and imagination in **Music**. They listen to and perform a wide variety of music inspired by literature in the fantasy genre and compose their own pieces that tell a story in this style. After half term pupils look at the concept of journeys expressed through music. Pupils appraise music by Smetana, Villa-Lobos, Adams and contemporary musicians. They undertake performing and composing assignments related to the journeys theme.

After school:

Monday - Rock School

Lunch time:

Monday – Chamber choir

Tuesday – Junior Choir

Wednesday – Concert Band (all wind players and percussionists)

Thursday – Senior Choir

Friday - Orchestra

In **PE** Year 8 pupils will be developing their skills, knowledge and understanding in netball, football and gymnastics (for some Year 8 groups). The department has also arranged many netball, football and basketball fixtures with schools across the district and county which parents are more than welcome to come and support. There are numerous extra curricular activities for netball, football, badminton, girl's rugby and basketball that continue this term and this is open for **all** pupils to attend.

### **Additional Literacy Support**

Pupils receiving additional literacy support will find LS on their timetable once a week with Mrs Vickers (Head of Learning Support). These lessons are primarily to improve pupils' reading, writing and spelling. Homework is alternative weeks of reading and spelling. All pupils in ALS have access to an ITC program "Wordshark" to help practise their spellings. They also can bring problems with homework to the LS Base every lunchtime. Additional reading and telling the time programmes are run at various points in the year.

### **Able, Gifted and Talented News**

This year we are continuing to focus on how provision can be developed further, on a daily basis, in the lessons. In their schemes of work, all departments have included challenging enrichment activities which aim to develop the pupils' thinking skills as well as encourage them to become more independent learners. We have an outreach programme which enables us to liaise also with higher/ further education institutions. These give us the opportunity to send some of our pupils to local schools, Master classes, lectures and activity days.

**If you have any concerns or queries regarding the curriculum at St Mary's Catholic School, please do not hesitate to contact Mr H Jones, Assistant Headteacher (Curriculum & Attainment)**

