



Year 9

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.

In Year 9 **R.E.** we look at the types of food and dietary customs observed in five major world faiths and design a special restaurant to accommodate all of these customs as an assessment task. We also study places and types of worship in Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Sikhism.

In Year 9 **English**, pupils have begun work on their Shakespeare project on a Shakespeare play (text chosen from a shortlist by individual class teachers). Following from this, pupils will be preparing for their school exam based on a GCSE level examination to prepare for their entry into their GCSE course in Year 10.

The focus of pupils studying **Maths** in Year 9 is the end of Key Stage 3 exam which is in May. It is a very similar exam to the old SATs exam except that they are internally marked. As with previous years, the streaming for GCSE mathematics in year 10 will heavily rely on the KS3 exam outcomes. So it is vital that every pupil works towards achieving their best result.

Work in lessons will involve pupils finishing off the required National Curriculum KS3 Programme of Study, in particular: Angles and Construction, Fractions, Decimals, Percentages and Ratio, Probability and Circles. During the term, pupils will be given revision tests on all aspects of Number and Algebra, Geometry and Measures and Statistics. Assessment points at the end of each half term will indicate current NC level and progression.

In **Science**, Year 9 pupils will be studying Extremes, Transport for the Future and Sport. They will also complete a number of short projects to help further develop the skills they need to be successful scientists.

In Year 9 **Art** there will still be a strong emphasis on drawing. Pupils were introduced to contemporary Art and Design developments and concepts and they discussed and researched these themes independently both in class and for Homework. The aim is that the Year 9 pupils develop GCSE level study skills and presentation. For enthusiastic Art pupils we will be running a Key Stage 3 Club afterschool on Tuesdays.

In **D & T** all Year 9 pupils will continue the “Bird Box” project started at the beginning of this term. This project is designed to follow the guidelines of GCSE coursework and could be submitted to gain an early GCSE in Product Design. Over the Christmas break students will be expected to model their ideas for evaluation in preparation for making. The workshops are open after school for those who wish to use the facilities to further their project work.

Drama: Year 9 The Secret Annex

This project explores the issues surrounding Jews in the Second World War. It focuses on concepts such as family relationships and the loss of privacy. At the end of the project, pupils perform an improvisational and educational piece of drama based on a theme in this project.

The aims are to:

- explore the issues;
- work on character development;
- create and perform improvisations based on a script;
- understand and use a variety of techniques and skills.

By the end of this project, pupils are expected to have:

- gained knowledge about the position of young Jewish people in the Second World War;
- learnt about the techniques used in creating a character;
- used a script for performance and/or as a basis for improvisation

MFL - The Year 9 **French** pupils study more about food and drink as well as healthy diet before going onto daily routine. The Year 9 **German** pupils are studying the topic on festivals and daily routine with part time jobs/pocket money and acquiring extensive vocabulary on these. They are also consolidating their knowledge of tenses. All pupils are encouraged to use the zut.org.uk website to practise their listening and writing skills and consolidate the grammar concepts covered in class. We offer further support every day at lunchtime within the department

The Year 9 **Spanish** pupils study the topic of holidays, focusing on travel, activities and opinions, and also the topic of food and drink. Pupils focus primarily on the past tense however they also consolidate their knowledge of the present and future tenses.

In Year 9 **Latin**, pupils will be moving from learning about adjectival agreements and using the second person singular in exchanges of speech to meeting relative clauses, whilst acquiring more vocabulary. They will be translating texts about life and customs in Britain for both the Romans and the Britons under Roman rule.

Year 9 **Geographers** have been studying the destruction of the tropical rainforests and considering a range of possible scenarios for this environment in the 21st Century. They are now studying the topic of tourism where they become aware of the good and bad points of tourism and the possible conflicts it can cause.

In Year 9 **Historians** are now studying the many changes and developments made in the last century. We have almost completed our study of World War I and the conditions in the trenches. We next turn our attention to the Treaty of Versailles, Ireland, the Russian Revolution and the Rise of Hitler.

In **ICT** this term, our Year 9 pupils are following Unit 9.2 and 9.4 of the Modified National Strategy ICT Scheme. Unit 9.2 which is about a survey on the issues which affect young people in two countries and concludes in the first few weeks of the this term. Unit 9.4 introduces pupils to the exciting topic of Digital video and sound. Pupils will be working in groups using software applications such as Audacity to edit and record audio, Windows Movie Maker to create the news video, Microsoft PowerPoint to develop the story board and Fireworks to edit any graphics. Both projects will lead to a possible level 6 attainment for our pupils and give the necessary skills needed to progress on to the OCR Nationals course at KS4. Pupils experiencing and achieving more complex lines of enquiry in their projects may be awarded a level 7.

Year 9 **Music** pupils study a broad selection from the vast array of popular music from 1910 to the present day. A wide range of genres are appraised and performed in a historical and sociological context. Pupils compose and perform their own songs on a variety of instruments in pairs and groups.

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 9 pupils will be developing their skills, knowledge and understanding within netball, football and badminton. 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, basketball, girl's rugby and sports excellence that continue this term and these are 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 each 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 pupils. 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)

