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Introduction

A New Beginning

The move to a new school should be stimulating, exciting and enjoyable. It is a time of new opportunities and new friendships. The first few days can also be challenging, as you find your way around the school, meet all of your teachers, take on new subjects and learn about our prep. expectations. This booklet is designed to offer information about, and guidance on, all matters academic in the Key Stage 3 years at Kingswood. Take time to read it so that you understand what you will be studying, and what skills you will develop in the pre-GCSE years.

A Broad Curriculum

Our aim is to give you a taste of as many subjects as possible in Years 7, 8, and 9 so that when you come to make curriculum choices for Year 9 Options and Year 10 GCSE Options, you will have the opportunity to select from a wide range of interests. Many pupils enjoy the range of subjects so much that they find it very difficult to choose three options!

A Curriculum Overview

The curriculum at Kingswood is lively and dynamic, responding and changing as different needs emerge. We follow an enhanced National Curriculum in terms of subject content, although not in terms of timetable allocations. We cherish our commitment to the teaching of Modern Foreign Languages. With this in mind, you will begin by studying two out of the three languages on offer: German, French and Spanish. (You may choose one and you will be allocated one more.) In Year 8 pupils may also study Latin as well, if appropriate. All of these subjects can be carried on to GCSE and Advanced Level.

We are committed to the delivery of History and Geography as separate humanities, and Religious Education has a central place in the school's teaching and learning. We are also proud of our commitment to the Practical-Creative subjects, where we achieve very high standards in Art, Drama, Design Technology and Music from Year 7 through to GCSE, Advanced Level and university entrance.

In ICT you will be guided through a programme which ensures that you will be able to use ICT confidently and purposefully. This will lead to a Functional Skills external qualification at the end of Year 9.

Each of the curriculum statements in this booklet has been written by a Head of Department. They give you a broad outline of all the topics covered and the skills learnt over the Key Stage 3 years. Furthermore, as you read you will learn a little about the variety of teaching and learning styles used, and the methods of assessment employed to keep track of your progress.

Your Tutor Group

In all three year groups, class sizes are around twenty pupils, but you will also be allocated to a tutor group.

Whether you are a boarder or a day pupil, if you are in Years 7 and 8 you will be based in Westwood, where Mr Hollywell is the Senior Housemaster and Mrs Mainwaring is the Housemistress. Mrs Hollywell also acts as a Houseparent with responsibilities in the House. There are three additional resident staff, and a large team of tutors.

You will be allocated to a tutor, who normally has responsibility for between twelve and fifteen pupils. He or she will register you in Westwood every morning. If you need to talk about your work with

someone other than a subject teacher or your parents, then you should go to your tutor. He or she will monitor your academic progress throughout the year, discuss your Interim and Full reports with you, and help you to set targets for future improvement. He or she will also check your student planner to make sure that you are using it to best effect, and help you to manage your time productively.

Year 9 pupils are allocated to Houses in the Senior School, where the same priority is given to the tutorial system, in which the tutor plays an equally important role.

Class Groups

Class groups in Years 7–9 are generally mixed-ability. However, in Year 7 Mathematics is taught in ability sets from the Autumn half term. In Year 8, Mathematics continues to be taught in ability sets whilst those who have chosen to continue with one modern language are taught together. By Year 9 Mathematics, modern languages and Science are taught in ability sets, whilst English and the Humanities and the Practical-Creative subjects are taught in mixed-ability groups.

A Partnership between Home and School

All of your teachers want you to enjoy their subjects, whilst making good progress. They will have high expectations of you and will encourage you to fulfil your academic potential at Key Stage 3. This means that you should not only establish effective working habits in school, but that you should also take responsibility for completing all of the prep set to the best of your ability. You will be given a student planner at the beginning of each academic year, and you will be shown how to use it daily. It will help you to manage your time effectively and meet deadlines. It contains some very important guidelines on prep and on setting yourself personal academic and extra-curricular targets; you and your parents should read them through so that you are fully aware of what is expected. If you are a boarder, or a weekly boarder, your parents will still want to be involved in the way that you work in your own time, so make sure that you take your student planner home and show them how you record your assignments.

Choosing Options for Year 9

Although you may continue with all of the subjects currently being studied in Year 8, you will also be able to include a ‘taste’ of others in the year prior to making your GCSE choices. The thinking behind this educational opportunity is that the School wants to provide breadth of experience in order that pupils may make an informed choice at GCSE.

In Year 8, depending on your interests and strengths, you will study Latin or be enrolled on the Study Support programme.

Those wishing to drop Latin in Year 9 will have the opportunity to focus on their two modern languages, whilst those following the Study Support programme in Year 8 will be given an introduction to Classical Civilisation in Year 9. (Latin and Classical Civilisation are both available at GCSE.)

In Year 9, all pupils will continue to follow courses in Art, Drama, Design Technology and Music. However, you must choose one subject of the four as your ‘core subject’ to take throughout the year. The other three subjects will be delivered as a ‘roundabout’ – you will have experience of them all during the course of the year. For example, if you elect to study Music for the whole year as your core subject, you may take Design Technology in the Autumn term, Art in the Spring term and Drama in the Summer term. Any of these subjects can be taken through to GCSE.

Mrs S Dawson
Deputy Head Academic

KINGSWOOD KS3 CURRICULUM

YEAR 7 in 2011-12

English	Maths	Science	MFL* or EAL	MFL or EAL	History	Geography	RE	PSHCE	Art	DT	Drama	ICT	Music	PE	Games
4	4	5	3	3	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	3

(40)

YEAR 8 in 2012-13

English	Maths	Science	MFL* or EAL	MFL or EAL	MFL	Latin or Study Support	History	Geography	RE	PSHCE	Drama	Art	DT	IT	Music	PE	Games
4	4	4	2+2 or 4			2	3	3	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	3

(41)

YEAR 9 in 2013-14: GCSE FOUNDATION YEAR

English	Maths	Science	MFL* or EAL	MFL or EAL	4 MFL and 2 Class. Civ.	ICT	PE or Latin	Latin p.6	History	Geography	RE	PSHE	Art	DT	Drama	Music	Games
4	4	9	3+3 or 4+2			2	2**	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	3

(41
or
42)

Core subject for whole year and other 3 subjects in termly cycle
--

* a 1st choice, choosing from French, German or Spanish

** PE and Latin on a fortnightly cycle

Getting Started

You will need to bring a well-equipped, named pencil case to all your lessons. It should contain:

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| * Fountain pen | * Spare cartridges |
| * Pencils | * Coloured pencils |
| * Pencil sharpener | * Rubber |
| * Ruler | |

It will also be helpful to have glue and scissors. For mathematics you will need a long ruler, a pair of compasses and a protractor. All of these items can be purchased at the School Shop. It is open on Mondays from 10.15am-12.15pm and 12.30pm-5.00pm, and on Tuesdays to Thursdays from 12.30pm-5.00pm. Items purchased may be paid for with cash or placed on the school bill.

Your Student Planner

Your tutor will give you your planner at the beginning of every year. It is designed to help you plan your work, manage your time, set targets for improvement and review your progress. You should take your planner to every lesson, and complete all entries neatly and accurately. Your parents will be asked to check and sign your planner every week, as will your tutor. They will also be able to use it to communicate with your tutor. At the front of your planner there is lots of useful information about Kingswood such as prep routines, the timings of the school day and important points of contact. At the back of your planner you will find some useful subject specific sections. Don't forget to refer to them when necessary.

ART

Mr S Brown

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

During Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9) you will have the opportunity to develop your creativity and imagination through a range of activities. These help you to build on, and improve, your practical and critical skills and extend your knowledge and experience of materials, processes and practices, including ICT (for example, drawing, painting, collage, print making, digital media, sculpture). You will engage confidently with art, craft and design in the contemporary world and from different times and cultures. You will learn to work on your own, and collaborate with others, on projects in two and three dimensions and on different scales.

Year 7 (Foundation Year)

This year is a vital period for helping all students from many different backgrounds to start on the same footing. The first term is structured as a transition stage from junior to senior school in which you will go through a range of different activities. During the year you will be engaged in termly projects in which all basic drawing skills are taught and strengthened. You will have a chance to work in 2D and 3D and learn to have confidence and knowledge with handling a variety of media.

Year 8 (Development Year)

An exciting year where you will have time to push boundaries and experiment with a wider range of media. You will have the chance to express yourself and work in group situations to produce large-scale work. Perspective, repeat pattern and basic printing are some of the areas you might investigate. Discussion will take place during the Spring Term as to whether you will be taking Art on as your core subject in Year 9.

Year 9 - Roundabout – (Strengthening)

If you pick this option you will have approximately one third of the school year in which to work on a thematic project building on what you have learnt in previous years. The focus will be creativity, enjoyment and realising your intentions in a positive environment. Basic skills for GCSE are taught and will give you a glimpse of what will be on offer during Years 10 and 11.

Year 9 - Core – (Strengthening and Preparation Year)

You will be able to focus on Art for a whole year. Each term you will engage in a different project that will help you to develop your:

- **visual recording skills** from a primary stimulus and employ visual elements such as line, tone, colour, form, compositional organisation, structure and scale. You will also learn to develop a personal sketchbook showing your thoughts research and ideas;
- **understanding of contexts in Art, craft and design** by integrating into your own practical work the knowledge and understanding of visual language gained from analysis and evaluation of artists' work, images, objects and artefacts and their contexts, including some first hand experience of original work, and from personal research from books and the internet;
- **practical skills** by developing and exploring ideas using a wide range of media, processes and resources in two and three dimensions including where appropriate ICT;
- **realisation skills** by creating and presenting a personal response (final piece/conclusion).

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

You will develop an independent way of working and thinking and be fully prepared to start your Art GCSE.

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

Mr B Brown

WHAT WILL I LEARN AND WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

At each level in the first three years, the emphasis is on enjoyment and learning, through experiencing, a wide range of practical skills and techniques related to design and the manufactured world that is all around us. All the projects that are undertaken will consist of key elements taught at exam level. There are no material costs involved at this level. All materials are provided by the school.

Safety

All pupils are introduced to the proper safe working practices at every stage of their work and will be issued with the appropriate personal protective equipment (and given appropriate instructions) whenever necessary.

Years 7 & 8

In the first two years pupils will have two lessons of Design Technology each week. They will learn workshop skills using a wide variety of tools and equipment – including some power tools. Alongside this they will begin to design aspects of their own projects and learn about the design process. The work is mostly practical with some drawing and writing. As their confidence and ability increase, they will have more say over how their design projects look and work. Each pupil will be expected to research materials for projects for themselves. Possible projects will involve the use of wood, metal and plastics. Included in the programme is a module of graphics to ensure that all are able to successfully produce drawings that can convey ideas.

Year 9

Pupils in Year 9 are invited to consider Design Technology as an option; they will not automatically take this subject as a core subject. During this year, however, the main foundations for GCSE work are laid that lead in turn to AS and A level Design.

There are two ways in which pupils may gain access to the necessary foundation for GCSE:

- a. Opting for the Core Practical in Design Technology where they will experience the work that will give them the ability to maximize their potential at GCSE. The course is design based and will provide them with many of the fundamental graphic, designing and making skills that they will need. It will address many of the design function concepts and will draw on a commercial and industrial perspective.
- b. Opting for the Practical roundabout will give pupils some awareness of the material that will be covered at GCSE. As the course forms a roundabout, each student will access the Design Department facility for one third of the school year. The level of experience will be adequate to continue to GCSE but students will not have the depth of knowledge of those who have followed the one year Core practical option in this subject. The course is design based and will provide them with some of the fundamental designing and making skills that they will need.

Work in this year will be far more focused on the design process and all practical projects will be worked out initially as paper design exercises. We endeavour to introduce more challenging design problems that relate to social needs, and we also look in detail at the use of the computer numerically controlled machines that are a feature of the department.

In addition to the school based work, those in the Core option will be offered the opportunity to become involved, as a regular part of the Activities programme, with a Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) session each week. Run in conjunction with the Physics and Mathematics departments, this is a very useful introduction to the base experience that will be built upon for those considering a career in Engineering.

Also available through the department in Year 9 is access to Smallpiece Trust Engineering Experience courses that will enhance the developing CV content for those wishing to consider a career in engineering.

DRAMA

Mr D Harding

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

Drama is fun. Learning about it is not just learning how to act. Learning about Drama is about developing communication skills. Pupils will learn to work effectively as part of a team, and invaluable speaking and listening skills that can be used in other subjects, and on stage. They will develop imagination and emotions, self-understanding and self-esteem. Through developing awareness of Drama as an art form, pupils will encounter different cultures, an ability to analyse dramatic texts and an understanding of the place of performance.

Year 7

Pupils will be taught one single period a week of Drama in Year 7. During this year they will develop skills and techniques that they will continue to use throughout their study of Drama. We will study mime, role play, improvisation, storytelling, and performing for an audience.

Year 8

As with Year 7, pupils will again be taught one single period a week of Drama in Year 8. Building on the work started in the first year at senior school, pupils will look at various stimuli such as poems, songs and folk tales that can be developed into pieces of drama. They will also look at how to use the voice appropriately and effectively when creating and performing a variety of characters of differing status. In the final term the skills learnt so far will be combined in an assessment which also involves writing a monologue for a character of their own creation.

Year 9

Pupils have the option in Year 9 to study Drama for two lessons a week for the entire year, or two lessons a week for a third of the school year.

The pupils who opt for the year long course will spend the first term widening the knowledge and understanding of the skills learnt in Year 7 and 8. In the Spring term the class will study the History of Theatre through a series of practical workshops, culminating in a written project which will be handed in at the end of the term. The final term of Year 9 will be spent working on one of Shakespeare's plays and using the skills learnt during Key Stage 3 to rehearse and perform mini versions of the whole play. Pupils will be set prep in Year 9.

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

The development of drama skills such as use of mime, role play, improvisation, interpreting scripts, tableaux, flashbacks, narration, and an ability to use these dramatic forms to communicate to others, is at the core of the department's curriculum. All of the skills developed over the three years of Key Stage 3 can be used and developed further by those wishing to study Drama at GCSE where the emphasis is on the ability to produce successfully fifteen to thirty minute performances which are assessed in rehearsals, and in front of an audience.

In addition to the above all pupils in Years 7 - 9 will be offered the opportunity to go on theatre visits organised by the department. They are also encouraged to audition for the Lower School production that is performed in the Summer term. Previous productions have included, 'Bugsy Malone', 'Arabian Nights', 'Twelfth Night', 'Rapunzel' and two open-air productions in the school grounds: 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and 'Much Ado about Nothing'.

ENGLISH

Mr D Hughes

Throughout the first three years at Kingswood, the teaching of English aims to foster enjoyment, curiosity and an awareness of the power and potentialities of the language. Our pupils learn to write clearly and adventurously, studying a wide range of literature, and practising the techniques required to express themselves coherently - in discussion, in drama focused activities, and in extended individual contributions. It is the aim of English teaching at Kingswood to nurture the intellectual and imaginative enthusiasm of our younger pupils, while at the same time giving them the confidence to convey their ideas accurately on paper and in discussion.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

In Years 7, 8, and 9, you will learn how to **read** fiction, drama, poetry, non-fiction, media texts, and various forms of argumentative/informative writing for meaning, and how to **write** in a variety of styles and in a range of forms, e.g., stories, poems, play scripts, personal letters, essays, pamphlets, reviews and diaries. You will revise how to use punctuation correctly and how to organise your writing to suit specific audiences and purposes. There will also be many opportunities to develop your confidence in **speaking and listening**. These activities include the following: listening and responding to stories and poetry, participating in group discussions, improvising, role-playing, reading aloud and debating.

Specifically:

In **Year 7**, you will study a modern novel, learn about the theatre in Shakespeare's time, and read *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. You will also be encouraged to read perceptively, and to discuss what you have read in class. Time is also set aside for journal writing, which will give you a further opportunity to develop your own ideas as a writer.

In **Year 8**, you will study a novel and either Shakespeare's *The Tempest* or *Twelfth Night*. We will also encourage you to read and analyse a range of non-literary and media texts, including brochures, advertisements, magazines and newspapers, so as to gain an understanding of the way in which writers use language, format and style to create an impact on their readers.

In **Year 9**, as well as reading a Shakespeare text – *Macbeth* – and a modern novel, you will develop those skills which will prepare you for GCSE English and English Literature courses in Year 10 and 11. We are keen to bring in visiting theatre companies, such as MOPA, to run Shakespeare workshops for our students, so that you can gain an understanding of Shakespeare's stagecraft and his skills as a dramatist. As in Years 7 and 8, there will be many opportunities to practise a variety of speaking and listening activities. You will also continue to practise writing with various purposes and audiences in mind.

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

By the end of Year 9, you will have mastered many of the skills needed not only for the GCSE English and English Literature courses, but for many other subjects that you will be studying. These will include the ability to write with confidence for a variety of purposes and audiences, and the ability to participate in different speaking and listening situations, as an individual, in a pair or a small group.

Along with all of these skills we hope that you will develop a love of reading, a confidence in your ability to communicate clearly and purposefully, and openness to challenges, new ideas, and various ways of seeing the world.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

Mr S Forrester

The EAL Centre is located in the heart of the English department. It is a resource centre equipped with a wide variety of reference, reading and audio-visual materials designed to help all pupils in the school for whom English is not their mother tongue to improve their language skills and competence so that they can derive the maximum benefit from an education delivered in English. For many pupils from overseas it is appropriate that they should receive extra support and tuition in English rather than take up a modern European language. English as an Additional Language is therefore taught in those periods on the timetable when the other pupils in the year group are learning another modern language.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

You will build on your knowledge of English by:

- reading books, graded readers and graded magazines in your spare time;
- using games and activities that develop your academic vocabulary;
- doing exercises to improve your grammar;
- talking about things you do in and out of school to build up your confidence in using and speaking English;
- taking part in other language-based activities to help you learn more about Britain and the British way of life.

You will be in small groups with pupils from your own year. If you need help with understanding the English and vocabulary of your other subjects, your EAL teacher is there to help you.

Year 7

You will spend a few weeks getting used to talking and reading in English. You will be given a great deal of help with new words but you will have to use English all the time.

The main focus of this year will be to develop your overall English language ability and be working between level A2 and B1 of The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. You will do a number of reading activities about interesting subjects which will focus on developing overall comprehension, teaching you correct grammar usage, as well as helping you to increase your reading sub-skills. Reading activities will contain pre-reading discussion activities to develop your confidence in speaking in your regular classes. You will also be reading graded readers outside of the classroom between pre-intermediate and intermediate level depending on your prior knowledge of English. You will also do a number of vocabulary games and exercises to help you learn key academic vocabulary. You will practise your writing by producing a weekly diary about a number of different subjects, such as boarding school life and the environment. Your teacher will give you feedback on your writing and will help you correct any errors.

Year 8

You will continue to use reading and vocabulary exercises to develop your English, but at a higher level than in Year 7. The vocabulary exercises and games in Year 8 will use academic vocabulary to show you how words are formed in English which will help you with your grammar. You will be working at level B1 The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and will read graded readers at this level outside of the classroom. You will continue to write your diary and you will be encouraged to be more stringent in your use of correct grammar, particularly tenses as well as use a greater range of vocabulary in your writing. You will also have EAL tutorials in which your teacher will help you with any language problems you are having in your mainstream school subjects.

Year 9

You will be working between level B1 and B2 of The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and will read graded readers at this level outside of the classroom. You will continue to do reading and vocabulary exercises at this level and will be introduced to more sophisticated reading skills, such as predicting and inferring the meaning of new vocabulary from context. You will continue to write your diary and will have the language ability to express your own ideas and opinions. In your mainstream subjects you will be expected to produce more extensive pieces of written work as well as classroom projects. EAL tutorials will help you to succeed in this work by giving you language support at the conception stage of the work, as well as providing you with language feedback before you submit your work to your subject teacher.

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

At the end of your first three years at Kingswood, you should have a good enough command of English and the way we do things at school in Britain to start on your GCSE courses with confidence, as you will have had the opportunity to develop all your language skills – reading, writing, listening and speaking.

GEOGRAPHY

Mrs D Jenner

Geography is concerned with the interaction between people and natural environments. The course in Years 7-9 aims to explore a range of contemporary examples of this. Where possible the work is based on primary data collection but also uses a variety of written sources as well as the Internet. Each year group has at least one field trip.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

The subject matter is based on a variety of scales:

Year 7

Year 7 focuses mainly on the local environment and the UK. The work ranges from natural features, such as rivers and their uses, to people and issues relating to settlement and transport.

Year 8

A range of environments associated with tourism in the UK and Europe are studied as a means of relating to pupils' personal experiences. The natural environments which have encouraged tourism, such as coasts and glaciated landscapes, are studied as systems in their own right, and the impact of people on them is evaluated.

Year 9

Year 9 focuses on world issues. The course is based on both more and less economically developed countries. Their environments, natural hazards and resources are investigated. We also look at the way people manage the environment and respond to hazards; world issues of poverty and wealth are introduced as phenomena on which pupils are expected to hold an informed view.

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

Geography is based on enquiry using primary and secondary data collection methods. Primary data collection involves fieldwork and surveys and is often carried out in groups. You will need to be able to work co-operatively and methodically. Secondary data is often based on written sources such as books and articles. This means that you will develop your reading for information skills. Geography also makes considerable use of ICT and all pupils will develop their skills using Word, Excel and the Internet in an integrated way to produce documents.

HISTORY

Mr P MacDonald

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

The History curriculum at Kingswood broadly follows the requirements of the National Curriculum in Years 7, 8 and 9. At the heart of the course is a study of the development of British History from the Norman Conquest to the Second World War. This is complemented by studies of European and World History from contrasting periods.

The Year 7 Course

Medieval Realms: Britain, 1066-1500

Islamic Civilisations during the Middle Ages

The Year 8 Course

The Tudors and Stuarts

The Industrial Revolution

The Struggle for the Vote in Nineteenth Century Britain

The Year 9 Course

The First World War

The Second World War

The Holocaust

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

- **Chronology**
Pupils will gain an understanding of the order in which the events of the past occurred.
- **Knowledge and Understanding**
Pupils will learn about the key events and personalities of the past and develop an understanding of the causes, consequences and significance of what happened in British and World History.
- **Historical Interpretation**
Pupils will gain an appreciation of how events and personalities in the past can be viewed in different ways.
- **Historical Enquiry**
Pupils will learn how to use critically a range of source material, considering issues such as the reliability and usefulness of evidence.
- **Organisation and Communication**
Pupils will learn how to organise and express their ideas, both orally and on paper.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Mrs C Sergeant

In ICT, we are keen to equip pupils for life in a world where they will increasingly need technological and information literacy skills. In Years 7 and 8 pupils are introduced to a wide range of software, and by the end of Year 9 they have developed sufficient skills to gain a Functional Skills Level 2 qualification, equivalent to a half GCSE. The course is vocational in nature and is intended to give students the opportunity to develop some of the skills laid out in the National Curriculum, which they are encouraged to apply across the curriculum.

By the end of Key Stage 3, in addition to a recognised ICT qualification, pupils have gained a knowledge and practical use of ICT skills which are relevant to their everyday learning experiences as well as laying solid foundations for future ICT courses at higher levels.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

During Year 7 you will be introduced to a range of software and then in Years 8 and 9 build on your knowledge to develop increasingly advanced skills to enable the most efficient use of a program and professional presentation of your work. In all years, we regularly work with other departments to reinforce the use of ICT as a tool to aid the development and presentation of your work across the curriculum.

Topics covered include:

- **Presentation skills** - presenting information electronically through use of word processing, desktop publishing and presentation software
- **Data modelling** – applying calculations to numeric data and creating charts for graphical representation through use of spreadsheets
- **Data handling** – organising of data through use of databases
- **Graphics manipulation** – editing existing images and creating images from scratch through use of graphics software
- **Web design** – creating web pages through use of web authoring software and introduction to html programming language
- **Movie editing** – creating and editing film footage through use of video editing software
- **Audio editing** – recording audio files (podcasts) through use of audio editing software
- **E-Safety** – increasing student awareness of importance of responsible use of the Internet

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

The ability to select the appropriate software for any task undertaken.

The ability to select the appropriate tool(s) for any task undertaken.

The confidence to use ICT independently and efficiently.

MATHEMATICS

Mr G Musto

Mathematics is a subject which recognises the order and sense in life, and puts that order into a framework. It is a universal language, which can represent the material facts from other disciplines in an abstract way. At Kingswood, we aim to help the pupils to notice the patterns in numbers and natural "facts", to consider and analyse them, and to understand them. From this understanding, we hope that they will learn to appreciate and enjoy the universality of the subject, its power and precision in communication, and the possibilities it presents for prediction. Included in this is the sufficient understanding and proficiency in calculation to be able to make sense of the numbers involved in everyday life, both with and without the aid of a calculator.

At Kingswood we initially place pupils into banded groups whilst they settle into the school in the first half of the term. Pupils will then be tested and set in ability groups from the beginning of November. Differentiation and enrichment will be key elements of the effective use of homework, and dedicated homework books will be issued to students to help with this process.

Extra-curricular activities include opportunities for gifted mathematicians, such as a masterclass activity based at Bath University; team events enabling groups to represent the School, code cracking activities, and national competitions. We also provide a weekly lunch time opportunity for Key Stage 3 pupils to visit the department and speak to A Level students about their prep work.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

The actual content of the syllabus is broken down into certain broad areas of study: number, algebra, measurement, geometry (i.e. shape and space), and data handling (i.e. probability and statistics).

Number:

An ability to calculate mentally lies at the heart of numeracy, and mathematics teaching at Key Stage 3. The importance of mental calculation methods are stressed throughout the course and you will be given regular opportunities to develop your skills involved through a range of activities.

Some examples of strategies are:

- use known facts to figure out new facts: for example, knowing that half of 250 is 125 can be used to work out $250 - 123$;
- understand and use the relationships between operations to work out answers and check results: for example, $900 \div 15 = 60$, since $6 \times 150 = 900$.

Algebra:

Algebra in Key Stage 3 is generalised arithmetic. Its origins lie in arithmetic, in the art of manipulating sums, products and powers of numbers. The same rules are seen to hold true for all numbers, of whatever type, so it becomes possible to generalise the rules with letters in place of numbers. Indeed all numerical entities, coefficients as well as unknowns, can be represented by letters.

Algebra in Years 7 to 9 includes equations, formulae and identities, and sequences, functions and graphs. Letters do not represent quantities like length or cost; they represent numbers. You will have spent much time working with numbers in Key Stages 1 and 2, and this experience is built upon. For example, in response to the question: "6? 8 = 48. What can you deduce from this?" A Year 6 class might suggest:

$$\begin{array}{llll} 8? 6 = 48 & 8 = 48/6 & 80? 6 = 480 & 16? 6 = 96 \\ 8? 6 + 1 = 49 & 6 = 48/8 & 80? 60 = 4800 & \text{and so on} \end{array}$$

At Key Stage 3, this can be extended into the simple manipulation of equations, referring back regularly to the number examples. For example, $ab = c$ implies:

$$ba = c \quad b = c/a \quad a = c/(2b) \quad ab = (2c)/2 \quad ab + 1 = c + 1?$$

Shape, space and measures:

Geometry in Key Stage 3 is the study of points, lines and planes and the shapes that they can make, together with a study of plane transformations. A key aspect is the use and development of deductive reasoning in geometric contexts. Geometrical activities can be linked to accurate drawing, construction and loci, and work on measures and mensuration. Through this work, understanding of shape and space and their appreciation of the ways that properties of shapes enrich our culture and environment.

Geometrical reasoning:

Pupils can be aware of and use geometrical facts or properties that they have discovered intuitively from practical work before they can prove them analytically. You will use and develop your knowledge of shapes and space to support geometrical reasoning. For example, tearing the corners off a triangle and placing them side by side at best indicates that the angle sum of a triangle is approximately 180° , and that however many particular cases you can find of triangles with an angle sum of 180° , this does not prove the general case.

Appreciation of shape and space:

Geometry cannot be learned successfully solely as a series of logical results. Pupils also need opportunities to use instruments accurately, draw shapes and appreciate how they can link together, for example, in tessellations. In Key Stage 3, it is vital to distinguish between the imprecision of constructions which involve protractors and rulers, and the 'exactness in principle' of standard constructions which use only compasses and a straight edge. Practical work with transformations will produce interesting problems to solve as well as helping you to understand the topic more fully. You will be asked to visualise solutions to problems such as: 'When a triangle is rotated through 180° about the mid-point of one side, what shape do the original and final triangles form?' Linking geometry to subjects such as art, through symmetry or tessellations, or religious education, perhaps through a study of the properties of Islamic patterns, American Quilt patterns at The Claverton Down Museum, or cathedral rose windows, offers good opportunities to develop creativity. By encouraging you to speculate why the properties you have found hold true we can help you to strengthen your reasoning skills. ICT also offers good opportunities to develop geometrical reasoning and an appreciation of shape and space.

Measures and mensuration:

You will need to develop your awareness of the relative sizes of units, converting between them, and using the rough equivalence of common imperial and metric units. Towards the end of the key stage, you will become familiar with compound measures such as speed or density. Work on perimeter, area and volume will extend to a range of shapes, including rectangles, parallelograms, circles, cuboids and prisms.

Handling data:

Primary and secondary sources: this gives you the experience of collecting and using primary data from, for example, questionnaires or results of an experiment, and secondary data from published sources, including reference materials, ICT databases and the Internet. Also you will study Probability. You will have met some of the language of probability in Key Stage 2 but will have little experience of quantitative probability. Probability is a measure of what might happen. You will learn to reason what the probability is for simple cases by considering all the possible outcomes for particular events.

The set text in Year 7 is *MEP Mathematics*, a popular scheme used across the UK which lends itself to an interactive style of delivery that links well with a holistic approach to learning, and initiatives such as Assessment for Learning. It supports pupils of all abilities, and has opportunities for differentiated learning, enrichment, and integrated ICT. One major benefit of the scheme is the enrichment and support material found on the CIMT website which can be accessed from the following web address, under the heading of “Secondary Key Stage 3”:

<http://www.cimt.plymouth.ac.uk/projects/mep/default.htm>

Course outline

The MEP scheme and later the Collins GCSE Foundation course (in Years 8 and 9) provides the pupils with a thorough grounding of the subject matter that underpins the lower order techniques found in the GCSE course; therefore its content will reflect that. However, as pupils make the transition through Year 7 into Year 8 and subsequently Year 9 this material is covered in a style more suited to preparation for the GCSE qualification.

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

The focus on mental **calculation** is important at primary school, and this underpins much of what is taught at Kingswood. However, the balance between mental and **written methods** and the progression from one to the other becomes increasingly important. **Thinking skills** underpin **using and applying mathematics** and the broad strands of **problem solving, communication and reasoning**. For example, you may experience occasional stand-alone lessons devoted to an investigation of a problem. However, mostly these will be integrated within everyday teaching, thereby helping you to connect your learning.

As Mathematics is a cumulative subject, many of the skills acquired during Key Stage 3 will form the backbone of work for GCSE and even A Level. An effective grasp of Mathematics is vital to the study of many other subjects, particularly the sciences.

All pupils are required to bring the necessary equipment to lessons; this includes a scientific calculator. The Mathematics Department recommends the Casio FX83ES for this purpose. Please note this calculator will be suitable for use at both GCSE and A level.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Mr R Duke

WHY SHOULD I STUDY FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH?

The experience of learning and using French, German and Spanish makes its unique contribution to the curriculum by allowing you to explore the life-style and culture of countries in which these languages are spoken. It can give you the experience of entering a foreign environment and existing within it. Coping for a while in a different language, whether in the classroom or in a foreign country, will be an enjoyable, rewarding and intellectually challenging experience. If you are able to communicate competently in French, German or Spanish this will enhance your ability to travel, make a wide circle of friends and gain a job in a rapidly changing and increasingly competitive world. You will need to be prepared for a world where greater skills in modern foreign languages will be very much in demand.

WHAT WILL A LANGUAGE TEACH ME?

Studying French, German and Spanish, amongst other languages, will teach you to attend to the meaning of words and sentences, to recognise differences in concepts and usage, and develop an awareness of the nature of language. It will enhance your ability to interact with others and you will learn to appreciate other people's roots, concerns and cultures. You will also learn to appreciate your own culture. Learning a language will allow you to respect others more and promote greater tolerance. The developments in computer technology mean that the world is becoming 'a smaller place' and you can have instant access to French, German and Spanish culture, as well as to young native French, German and Spanish speakers.

THE COURSE

In Year 7 you may choose one language from French, German or Spanish and you will be allocated your second modern foreign language. There are significant structural differences between French, German and Spanish and this gives real breadth to the language learning experience. You follow a very accessible and practical series of textbooks in the two languages you study. These courses are complemented by computer software which allows you to work at your own pace on comprehension exercises. You can expect the teaching to be supplemented with material from a variety of authentic sources including music, DVD and the Internet. The faculty uses interactive whiteboards which allow for a multi-sensory experience.

WILL THERE BE OPPORTUNITIES TO TRAVEL?

Yes. You will have the opportunity to travel to France and/or Germany in the course of the second and third year of your learning. Over the last eight years there have been biennial trips to Germany (Koblenz) with 60-83 pupils taking part. There has also been one trip to Northern France in this time, and 60+ pupils in Years 8 and 9 will be travelling to Paris in October 2011. This will also become a biennial experience. These trips are designed to give you a taste of the culture and language before participating on an exchange in Year 10 and above to Germany and/or France and/or Spain. The Spanish department is also looking at the possibility of a lower school trip to Spain in 2011-2012.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Year 7

You will learn to make yourself understood through studying the following: greetings; introducing yourself; nationalities, time; numbers; alphabet; school routine; classroom; phrases; colours; family and pets; personal appearance; free time and hobbies; meeting friends; pen-friends; where you live; house; home life; home town; ordering food and drink; future holidays.

Year 8

You will refine your language skills and explore different tenses through the following: extended introductions; weather; talking about an event in the past; past holidays; health and fitness; visiting the doctor; food & drink in the past; buying food & shopping; pocket money; organising to meet friends; transport; directions; clothing; inviting friends to a party; describing a previous birthday; opinions on television programmes; future wishes.

Year 9

Your competence in French, German and Spanish will increase and you will learn to use more complex grammar through the following: extended introductions; useful expressions for a school exchange; talking about a trip in the past; opinions on school; school rules; future plans in school; reasons to visit a country; the environment; opinions on films, music and books; discussing the benefits of the computer; part-time jobs; saving money & future plans; buying clothes; family; rules at home; problems at home and resolutions; letter writing. (Where a topic is mentioned more than once, the coverage incorporates consolidation and extension work.)

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

Effective learning of a foreign language provides many opportunities, for pupils to develop their skills of communication by listening, speaking, reading and writing. You will practise the observational and study skills of noting detail, of comparing, selecting, extracting, interpreting and re-ordering information from various sources and of committing to memory useful material for subsequent recall. You will exercise your imagination by playing various improvised roles. You will improve your personal and social skills by learning to communicate, co-operating and contributing in class and considering the views of others. Finally, effective foreign language learning equips pupils with a skill which is crucial to future careers. Competence in foreign languages will be of huge importance in a rapidly changing and increasingly competitive world. You will need to be prepared for a world where greater skills in modern foreign languages will be very much in demand.

I AM A (NEAR) NATIVE SPEAKER; CAN I TAKE GCSE EARLY?

Whilst the main aim of the Language Faculty is to provide you with the opportunity to learn a language, if you are a native speaker of French, German or Spanish you will be able to sit the GCSE early under the supervision of and with the agreement of the Language Faculty. While an 'A' Level in the language might be linguistically possible for you, the topics discussed might be intellectually too demanding. If you are a native or nearly-native speaker, we would encourage you to study other European languages on offer. The Faculty can also offer activities to enhance your knowledge of the language of which you are a native, or near native, speaker. There may be scope for a (near) native speaker to have a weekly conversation class with a language assistant. We employ first rate Foreign Language Assistants. In 2011 we will have French and Spanish assistants in school, and the combination rotates on an annual basis.

MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS

We encourage all pupils studying languages to subscribe to carefully designed magazines in the languages they are studying to develop their reading for pleasure skills. These magazines are used in library lessons occasionally and sometimes for prep. Information about these is sent to parents in the summer mailing. Parents are only required to reply, if they wish their child(ren) NOT to subscribe.

IS IT POSSIBLE TO TAKE A MODERN LANGUAGE GCSE EARLY AS A NON-NATIVE SPEAKER?

The Modern Language Faculty is wary of you taking GCSE early simply for the sake of being fast-tracked. The benefit of fast-tracking must be that you will gain an A*. The decision to accelerate a whole group is dependent on an identifiable cohort making exceptional progress in Year 8. The decision to fast track is considered on a year on year basis.

MUSIC

Mr R Mainwaring

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

You will learn the following skills:

- perform with increasing control of instrument specific techniques;
- sing unison and part songs developing technique and musical expression;
- practise, rehearse and perform with awareness of different parts and roles;
- improvise, explore and develop musical ideas;
- analyse, evaluate and compare pieces of music;
- communicate ideas and feelings about music using musical vocabulary;
- listen with discrimination;
- identify contextual influences that affect the way music is created, performed and heard.

Music is a compulsory subject in Years 7 and 8, and is part of the practical creative group of subjects for Year 9. During these years the aim is to give our pupils such musical experiences as to enable them to participate successfully when performing, composing, listening, and appraising.

Year 7

In Year 7, pupils will develop their skills in four major areas of music: pitch; rhythm; structure; timbre and texture. They will perform, compose, listen and appraise focusing on the areas above, all within an historical context.

Pitch – pupils will accurately sing and play melodies and learn to understand basic scale systems, the relationship between melody and harmony, and the difference between major and minor.

Rhythm – pupils will understand the concept of bars, and play simple rhythms involving crotchets and quavers.

Structure – pupils will learn to recognise and understand simple structures such as Rondo form.

Timbre and Texture – pupils will explore basic relationships between high/low and thick/thin textures, and gain some understanding of instrumental sounds.

Year 8

In Year 8, pupils will continue to develop the skills they have acquired in Year 7.

Pitch – pupils will accurately sing and play more complex melodies. They will learn to understand more difficult scales (eg chromatic), the relationship between bass and harmony, and apply knowledge of chords such as major, minor and diminished.

Rhythm – pupils will learn about more difficult rhythmic subdivisions such as triplets and semiquavers, and understand the use of syncopation.

Structure – pupils will utilise structures such as variations, ternary and recitative.

Timbre and Texture – pupils will begin to understand instrumental roles and further explore timbral qualities.

Year 9

In Year 9, pupils who opt to pursue music as a core subject will spend the year studying music at a more advanced level in preparation, possibly, for GCSE.

Pitch – pupils will sing and perform both solos, and as part of ensembles. They will understand and utilise ideas such as motif, augmentation and diminution. Pupils will also understand more complex chord relationships.

Rhythm – pupils will consolidate their understanding of more complex subdivisions.

Structure – pupils will understand more popular song structures such as Verse/Chorus and 12 Bar Blues.

Timbre and Texture – pupils will further understand instrumental roles and ranges through listening exercises and score-reading.

Pupils who do not opt for Music as a core subject will receive one third of the school year of music teaching. In this time, they will focus on the same areas as above, but obviously in less detail.

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

All of these activities will use a wide range of musical styles from Western Art music to all forms of popular music and music from around the world. This will help to broaden your musical and cultural outlook. At Kingswood, we regard music as a skill-based subject where pupils are encouraged to develop self-discipline, creativity, problem-solving skills, critical awareness and an ability to cope with nerves. These are all very important “life skills”, which music can play a vital role in nurturing and developing. And it’s fun!

PHYSICAL EDUCATION and GAMES

Mr T Reeman

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

Physical Education contributes to the overall education of young people by helping them to lead full and valuable lives through engaging in purposeful physical activity. At Kingswood the physical education programme aims to help our pupils to:

- develop physical competence and help promote physical development;
- understand and value the benefits of participation in physical activity while at school and throughout life;
- develop an appreciation of skilful and creative performances across a range of activities;
- develop the personal qualities of commitment, fairness and enthusiasm.

In the first three years we follow the National Curriculum for Key Stage 3. During this stage all pupils will have one double lesson of physical education and one triple lesson of games each week. They will experience at least four areas of activity in any year. The areas of activity include athletic activities, dance, games, gymnastic activities, outdoor and adventurous activities. Swimming is included in the programme as part of athletic activities at this stage. Throughout this key stage pupils will be involved in the planning and evaluation of sessions as well as taking part.

The basic elements of the **P.E.** curriculum are:

Year 7 Educational Gymnastics, Swimming, Outdoor Activities, Games for Understanding

Year 8 Gymnastics, Swimming, Dance, Outdoor Activities, Minor Games

Year 9 Basketball, Gymnastics, Swimming, Health Related Fitness.

In all of these activities, the requirements needed to lead a healthy and active lifestyle are emphasized, and provide a useful introduction to those who wish to develop their practical and theoretical knowledge by choosing to take a GCSE in Physical Education in Years 10 and 11.

The **Games** programme in Years 7, 8 and 9 has an emphasis on team sports. Working together in order to achieve success is a fundamental requirement in many areas of life and our Games programme hopes to prepare our pupils for this. In addition, we hope to teach students how to win and how to lose graciously; some will also experience the demands of leadership, and all that a more responsible role requires. On a practical note, we hope to fulfil the talents of all our students whether that is representing the School at 'B' team level, or going on to gain international recognition.

The main Games played in Years 7, 8, and 9 are:

Boys Rugby, Hockey, Cross Country, Tennis, Athletics, Cricket.

Girls Hockey, Netball, Cross Country, Tennis, Athletics, Rounders.

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

Over the course of the three years, students should develop many of the skills which underpin the successful performance of these sports. Strength, speed, stamina, balance, and co-ordination should all be enhanced, and many students will establish the basics required to enjoy a long and successful career in a variety of sports.

PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education)

Mrs S Marshall

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

There is one lesson of PSHCE every week in each of Years 7, 8 and 9. PSHCE is about how individuals develop personally, in ways such as how we grow up physically and how we change through adolescence. It is about our relationships with other people, our families, friends and teachers at the school. It also covers matters relating to being healthy and fit and what it means to be a good citizen.

Work in PSHCE includes some teaching, discussion, role plays, videos and written work. In some topics you will be spending some time producing a project, or preparing to give a talk on a chosen subject.

Year 7

Near the beginning of the year you will experience the Year 7 Challenge Day, when you will be placed in teams and set a number of exciting challenges. This will help you to get to know other pupils, and the layout of the school.

In lessons we will cover subjects such as settling into school routines and rules; what to do if you have a problem; coping with prep.; being organised; dealing with difficult people; keeping safe; learning to be responsible with money; healthy eating; citizenship and preparing for examinations.

You will also do an independent learning project in the library.

Year 8

Some of the topics we cover are friendship, marriage and divorce; self-esteem; drugs and alcohol; citizenship; reflection on Year 8 and plans for Year 9.

You will also do a project on a topic, such as healthy eating, that will further develop your study and research skills.

Year 9

We will cover a range of topics, including healthy eating; peer pressure; drug awareness; sex and relationships; cyber bullying; making good choices; body image; the judicial system.

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

- You will develop the ability to understand and express your opinions in a safe environment.
- You will absorb some information on important matters, such as drugs, e-safety, relationships and citizenship.
- You will develop your strengths in working with other pupils.
- You will increase your skills in planning, research and ICT as you compile your projects.

This should have a positive effect on your academic performance, your social development and your well-being, and give you self-confidence in all aspects of school life.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Mrs L Court

As a Methodist foundation within the Christian tradition, Kingswood seeks to give its young people the chance to explore and respond to the rich diversity of that tradition. RE does not seek to impose or inculcate any particular view, and is aware of and sensitive to other faith traditions and other lifestyles.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

- The principal beliefs of more than one religion and how they affect personal and corporate action
- The importance of special people, traditions and writings
- Religious and, where appropriate, non-religious responses to contemporary moral issues, both personal and social, questions about the meaning of life and the variety of responses which may be given to them

Year 7

The nature of religious language; the Torah; the life of Christ.

Year 8

A study of world faiths: Judaism; Islam; Hinduism; Sikhism; Buddhism. Their origins, development and major beliefs, as well as their influence on the lifestyles of the faith community.

Year 9

All pupils in Year 9 start the OCR GCSE course in Religious Studies.

Syllabus: Christianity; Ethics

Topics: Worship; Festivals; Christian denominations and communities; Poverty and Wealth

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

You will:

- develop an understanding of religious language and concepts;
- understand something of the beliefs and practices of those who see life in religious terms (as well as those who do not);
- begin to learn how to evaluate controversial questions which arise from the study of religion;
- select and present relevant information in an organised way.

SCIENCE

Dr N Sheffrin

SCIENCE INTRODUCTION

In Years 7 and 8 science is taught in mixed-ability sets. Pupils are taught by the same teacher for each year of the course, during which time they follow *Exploring Science*, a well resourced, integrated science course that covers many topics from biology, chemistry and physics. The concepts are revisited at a higher level each year so that learning is reviewed, consolidated and developed throughout the course.

At the end of Year 8 the internal test results, together with the end of year examination result, are used to place pupils in ability sets for Year 9.

Pupils in Year 9 start their GCSE courses in science. These courses continue to develop the ideas and content taught in Year 7 and Year 8.

Science is a core subject in the curriculum and is taken by all pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11. Pupils study the three separate sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) and take the related module papers for the GCSE examinations in January and June of Year 11. This course is timetabled for nine lessons a week, three for each science subject.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

Year 7

Science investigations, acids and alkalis, forces, variety of life, materials, energy, magnetism, matter, growing up, sight and sound, rocks, environment.

Year 8

Diet and digestion, energy and respiration, disease, water as a resource, chemical reactions, the elements, the earth, light and sound, forces and transport and heat energy.

The content of the three year course covers many aspects of a good science education, with particular emphasis on evaluating evidence, and the implications of science in society. The theme of How Science Works runs throughout the course and is assessed through practical work and examination papers.

Pupils will be able to apply their knowledge with understanding to scientific examples from domestic, industrial and environmental contexts and there are opportunities to use key skills to present information clearly and logically using a variety of techniques, including ICT.

Year 9

The content for each science in Year 9 is specified in the table below. Unit 1 is studied in Year 9, Units 2 and 3 in Years 10 and 11.

Biology. Unit 1. Y9	Chemistry. Unit 1. Y9	Physics. Unit 1. Y9
Diet, Exercise, Hormones, Genes, Drugs.	Atoms, Rocks, Metals and Fuels.	Energy and Efficiency.
Surviving and changing in the Environment.	Polymers, Plant Oils, the Earth and its Atmosphere	Electrical Energy and Waves.

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

Science investigation skills are developed during the course, with an emphasis on safety. Pupils develop their understanding of controlled and experimental variables, replication of data, graphical skills, and analysis and evaluation of experimental results. The content is kept relevant to everyday life, and pupils are encouraged to research information using books and the internet. ICT skills are also developed during the course.

More information about the Separate Science course can be found on the Examination Board website: www.aqa.org.

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION – AN OPTION IN YEAR 9

Mrs S Dakin

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

The purpose of this course is to acquire an understanding of some of the elements of Classical Civilisation, literature and language which have had a profound influence on modern societies, to fire imagination and to deepen and develop experience by considering aesthetic, ethical, linguistic, political religious and social questions.

In our study of Classical Civilisation, we shall explore Greek Religion, Roman Religion, Pompeii and, in classical literature, Homer's *Iliad*.

We use a range of textbooks, set texts, DVDs and videos, as well as three interactive programmes on our Intranet focusing on Greek gods and goddesses, Roman life, and the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in Pompeii.

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

The course provides students with opportunities by means of a range of topics to:

- acquire an understanding of Greek and Roman civilisations studied in historical context;
- read, understand and make a personal response to literature in translation;
- develop an awareness of the similarities and differences between the classical world and later times;
- make an informed response, based on evidence, to the material studied, using written and, where appropriate, oral and other means of communication.

The Assessment Objectives of this course focus on students' demonstration of knowledge and understanding of classical civilisation, and ability to interpret, evaluate and respond to classical literature.

Classical Civilisation is now available to take as a GCSE, however, as the course content is not started until Year 10, a pupil is not precluded from taking it as a GCSE if they have not taken the course in Year 9.

LATIN – begun in Year 8 and optional in Year 9

Mrs S Dakin

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

Latin is taken by most pupils in Year 8 and has been greatly enjoyed by pupils of different talents and abilities. In Year 8 pupils are grouped for Latin according to their Modern Languages classes.

There are some popular misconceptions about studying Latin in this modern age. Pupils sometimes say: "It's dead, isn't it?" (Yes, like Mozart and Shakespeare.) "It's hard, isn't it?" (Some have found it so.) "It doesn't lead to anything, does it?" (I hope the following explanation puts the lie to that.)

Modern teaching methods of Latin are far removed from the old image. The Cambridge Latin Course teaches primarily reading skills which are very different from and much easier to acquire than writing skills. In Book 1 the stories are set in the context of a 1st century A.D. Pompeian family, immediately prior to the eruption of Vesuvius. During the first months the pupils learn about subjects and objects, three tenses of verbs and the use of prepositions and pronouns. But equally important is the work done on the background material. Here we deal with family life, the Pompeian house, the working day for rich and poor, slaves and freedmen, gladiatorial shows, the baths (the Romans were a scrupulously clean lot!), Roman attitudes to foreigners, and finally the eruption of Vesuvius. We aim to complete Book 1 in Year 8.

After Pompeii the course moves on to Roman Britain where we encounter irregular verbs, participles and infinitives, as well as Roman high-handedness and British rebellion. The next stop is the turbulent city of Alexandria with its uneasy racial mix, and we examine the amazingly advanced medical treatments of the best doctors, comparing them with the horrifying ones of the worst. All the while great attention is paid to vocabulary and grammatical detail, because despite all the fun elements of the course, old-fashioned disciplined learning is still essential.

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

The reasons for studying Latin are cultural and linguistic. A vast amount of European culture, both literary and artistic, is based upon a knowledge of the Classical world, and the benefits conveyed by even a small amount of Latin to the study of most European languages (not least English) are immense. But, in addition to all the spin-offs, the great joy is the subject itself. The literature - serious, moving, and often hilarious, deals with the constants of humanity and is among the greatest of all time.

Not all will become great Latin scholars and if, after one year you decide that Latin is not for you, that is fine. At least you have seen what it is like. However, because of the inherent interest and value of the background material, and the relatively light linguistic demands of the first year of Latin, even those who decide not to continue with the subject should have found much to benefit them.

Some may feel that although they have learned much from studying the Latin language, their skills are better suited to the historical and social aspects alone and for these pupils Classical Civilisation may be an attractive option. Pupils may choose Classical Civilisation in Year 9 or, if they would like another year of Latin, they have another chance to pick up Classical Civilisation as a GCSE subject at the start of Year 10; they will not be at any disadvantage, but rather another year of Latin will greatly support this choice.

SPANISH – An option in Year 9

Mr D Walker

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

A textbook will provide the basic shape for the year, but students can expect it to be supplemented and replaced with material from a variety of authentic sources including music, DVD and the internet.

Within this context, Year 9 Spanish will offer an introduction to the language that will enable the communication of basic information and a thorough grounding in essential grammar. Linguistic structure plays a vital role in language learning and the successful manipulation of language requires a good feeling for both communication and accuracy. Learners will be very quickly encouraged to experiment with the language and communicate with the teacher and each other in Spanish. This will require a sense of humour and willingness to participate, but it quickly brings with it a sense of achievement.

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

Effective learning of a foreign language provides many opportunities, for pupils to develop their skills of communication by listening, speaking, reading and writing. You will practise the observational and study skills of noting detail, of comparing, selecting, extracting, interpreting and re-ordering information from various sources and of committing to memory useful material for subsequent recall. You will exercise your imagination by playing various improvised roles. You will improve your personal and social skills by learning to communicate, co-operating and contributing in class and considering the views of others. Finally, effective foreign language learning equips pupils with a skill which is crucial to future careers. Competence in foreign languages will be of huge importance in a rapidly changing and increasingly competitive world. You will need to be prepared for a world where greater skills in modern foreign languages will be very much in demand.