



# Year 9 Curriculum

At Dunottar we want to add value to every pupil so that, no matter what a child's individual abilities are, they are challenged and supported to develop a love of learning and to be prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Our Warrior Learner concept encourages our pupils to embrace the behaviours of aspiration, tenacity, curiosity, creativity, collaboration, inclusivity and independence. Lessons are designed to allow pupils to display these behaviours and reporting at KS3 refers directly to these.

Lessons are well-paced, challenging and fun. Within the curriculum each pupil is encouraged to achieve his/her full potential. The curriculum aims to educate the whole person through creative thinking and creative learning and the curriculum at Dunottar School extends far beyond the classroom and is enriched by a wide range of co-curricular activities.

## English

The aim of the final year of Key Stage 3 is to develop, extend and consolidate pupils' knowledge and skills in preparation for their GCSEs in English language and English literature.

The GCSEs encourage pupils to read high quality, challenging literature as well as non-fiction texts from different genres. For this reason, Year 9 pupils sample a wide range of 19th-century fiction and nonfiction texts, building on their Year 8 knowledge of literature from this period. Pupils practise GCSE English language and literature skills, which we explicitly link to these texts.

Now that the pupils are more emotionally mature, we introduce them to war and conflict poetry, which forms an important part of our literary heritage. This also helps the pupils to appreciate a cross-curricular battlefields tour to Belgium and a cross-curricular WW1 day, organised by the history department.

Year 9 students study the following:

- War and conflict poetry
- A Shakespeare play
- A GCSE standard modern prose text
- 19th-century fiction and nonfiction extracts
- Oracy: a public speaking competition

As wider reading helps to develop vocabulary and comprehension skills, we continue to encourage reading for pleasure at home. We also recommend that pupils experiment with 19th-century classics.



## Mathematics

In Year 9 pupils begin to study the Edexcel IGCSE Mathematics course, which can be sat at one of two levels, Foundation or Higher. As well as developing procedural fluency in mathematical techniques, pupils develop their problem solving skills, and learn to reason and communicate mathematically. All pupils study the content necessary to access both the Foundation and Higher level qualifications; most pupils sit the Higher level in Year 11. The decision as to whether a pupil is best suited to Foundation or Higher level is not made until Year 11.

The IGCSE mathematics curriculum broadly falls into the following six strands. Aspects of each strand are taught in Year 9:

**Number:** Fractions, decimals, percentages, indices and surds

**Algebra:** Simplifying and solving expressions and equations

**Ratio, proportion & rates of change**

**Geometry & measure:** Angles, polygons, area, volume, Pythagoras and trigonometry

**Probability**

**Statistics**

Pupils are taught in ability sets and all sets follow the same flow of topics, meaning that pupils can easily move from one set to another to maximise their learning. Pupils use Hegarty Maths both in class and for homework, they can access both video lessons and quizzes on [www.hegartymaths.com](http://www.hegartymaths.com). In the spring term, a large number of pupils have the opportunity to compete in the Intermediate Maths Challenge, a national competition. Each student has access to Sparx, an online homework and independent learning platform. All homework will be set using this intuitive program with follow up support, or stretch and challenge tasks created from their homework responses.

## Science

Students begin their GCSE course in Year 9, all following the separate science curriculum for this year. At the end of Year 9 students are set into classes and either continue with the separate course or move onto the Combined Science course. From year 9 each class has a specialist teacher for each of the three sciences.

### Biology Topics

Cell Biology (Cell Structure and transport; Cell division), Organisation (Digestive system, circulatory system, Breathing system and Organisation of plant tissues and organs).

### Chemistry Topics

Atomic Structure & Periodic Table, Structure and Bonding.

### Physics Topics

Energy transfer by heating; Using energy; Electrical energy; Generating electricity.

## Foreign Languages

In Year 9 pupils have a choice of taking either French or Spanish. Pupils consolidate and extend all prior learning and focus on developing the communication skills required for a strong start in GCSE. The topics in Year 9 are a lot more "grown up" and in line not only with GCSE specifications, but also with the interests of growing teenagers.

### French and Spanish

Pupils will improve their knowledge of three time frames and extend their grasps of the language while focusing on topics such as family and relationships, home and region, studies and free time. Role-plays and conversations are also used to develop speaking and listening skills.



## Geography

The course opens with a spotlight on development, stereotypes and misconceptions where we try to answer the question 'How should we be measuring countries in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?'. This then leads to an in-depth study of China and its geography, population, environmental concerns and China's increasing global dominance economically. The One Child Policy is studied with its implications for China both now and in the future and pupils are increasingly exposed to a wide range of data presentation techniques and supported to interpret a range of data on which to form opinions. Environmental concerns in China and potential world-wide impact are covered, which leads into our climate change unit further on in the course. After Christmas, pupils will investigate the benefits and disadvantages that globalisation can bring and how global trading systems have been organised. The highlight of this unit is the 'Trading Game' which demonstrates to pupils how the system is rigged in favour of richer more dominant countries and how difficult it is for the benefits of globalisation to reach the very poorest members of society. By Easter, pupils will be introduced to more enquiry questions through the study of climate change and challenged with deciding what course of action the Maldives should take against ever increasing sea level rises. Throughout all these units we continue to use and develop map skills, photo interpretation, data presentation and interpretation. We take a glimpse at the new GCSE course and 'Challenge of Natural Hazards' at the very end of Year 9 when the British Cartographic Society come into school for a fun- packed session exploring maps of the Japanese areas affected by the Japanese earthquake in 2011. An optional trip to Iceland is offered on rotation with other department's overseas trips.

## History

The History curriculum is based on a series of enquiry questions. In Year 9, these questions are:

Pupils will be taught the following enquiry units in this order:

Enquiry 1: Who was responsible for the abolition of the trade in enslaved Africans in the British Empire?

Enquiry 2: To what extent did the Emancipation of the enslaved Africans in the USA lead to equality?

Enquiry 3 How did 2 bullets in 1914 impact the lives of people in Britain and her Empire in the years 1914-1918?

Enquiry 4 How did World War One impact the politics of Europe up to 1939?

Enquiry 5 The Holocaust

Enquiry 6: The Windrush Generation & Race Relations

## Religious Studies

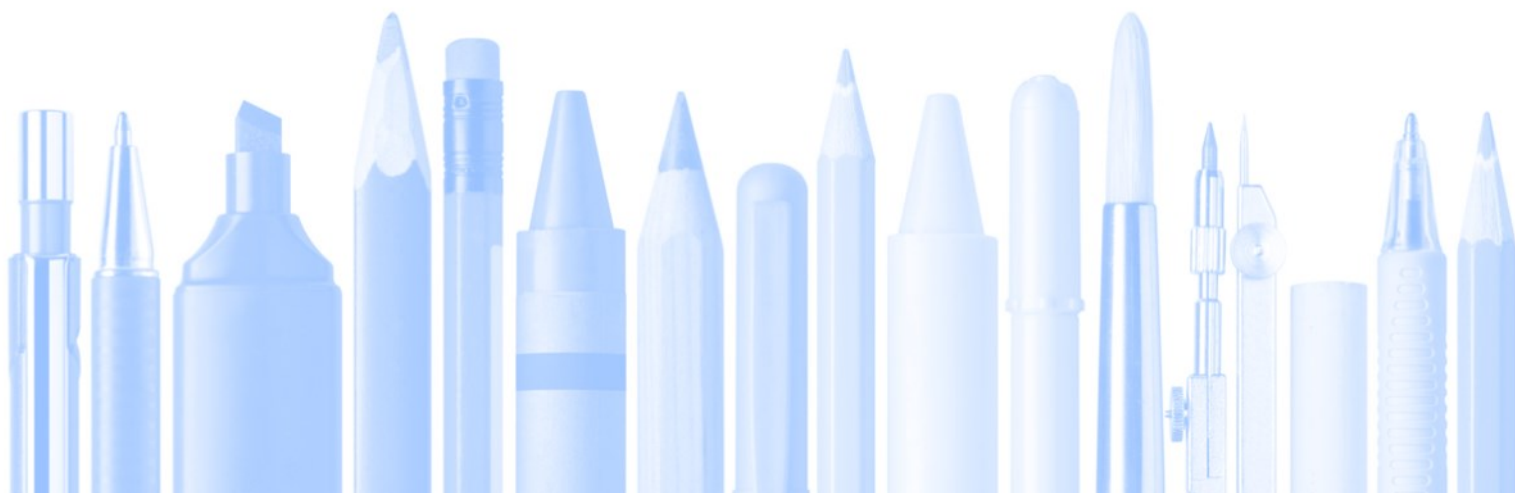
In Year 9 we explore the following important questions:

**Is there a right way to live?** This is a multi-faith unit that seeks to answer the question posed. Pupils look at current affairs and draw ideas from religious and personal points of view, considering moral systems and where morality comes from.

**Truth and Reality** This philosophical unit examines the concepts of truth and reality. Pupils look at several philosophers and their views of truth and reality; Plato's analogy of the cave features heavily.

**Is death the end?** Pupils unpack and analyse the question of what happens when we die from both religious and secular points of view.

**What does the idea of suffering mean to Buddhists?** The question of suffering is often seen as an issue for those with faith. David Hume called it the "cornerstone of Atheism". This unit looks at the Buddha's quest to answer the question of why we suffer and analyse the answers that he found.



## Art & Design

In Year 9 pupils explore the uses of art as a form of narrative and the ways in which the visual guides today's modern world, with an emphasis on Portraiture and Mechanical Forms. They investigate a range of materials and processes and will develop their control of media and techniques through refinement of their work. They will continue to look at codes and conventions and how these are used to represent ideas, beliefs and values in works of art, craft and design. Pupils will continue to develop their ideas in their sketchbooks and consider alternative traditions in image making to enhance their knowledge and understanding of current practices in the creative fields.

## Design & Technology

In Year 9, pupils develop their design communication skills through a series of technical drawing exercises. Afterwards, the pupils design and make an item of pewter-cast jewellery, using CAD/CAM to produce a mould and then hand-finish their cast item in the workshop.

## Food & Nutrition

In Year 9 students will have studied a range of commodities including:

- Fruit and Vegetables
- Grains and cereals
- Meat, fish and poultry
- Pluses, legumes and meat free alternatives
- Dairy products
- Fats, oils and sugars

They will be learning about the functional and nutritional properties of each commodity through a range of practical tasks which include making a variety of dishes, such as, fruit salad with sugar syrup, mini apple and blackberry tarts, pizza, risotto, macaroni cheese, Swiss roll, and chocolate Danish pastries.

## Computing

In Year 9 pupils learn some app development and get a chance to create their own apps. They study cyber security and learn about threats to IT systems and what can be done to prevent them. They develop their programming skills in Python which prepares them for embarking on a GCSE if they wish to study Computing further. Artificial Intelligence is a growing and complex area of technology which has applications in a vast range of areas of modern life. We give an introduction into how neural networks work and how they are used in machine learning. Pupils gain an insight into current applications of AI and the ethical issues involved.

## Drama

During Year 9, the curriculum closely mirrors the structure of the GCSE Drama course. Pupils study a range of styles and practitioners; looking at the work of Stanislavski and the theatre company Frantic Assembly. Pupils consider the stylistic differences, learning how to perform in the style of these practitioners, analysing and evaluating the impact on the audience. During the year, pupils will practically study the plays *DNA* by Dennis Kelly, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime* by Mark Haddon and Simon Stephens and *Bouncers/Shakers* by John Godber and Jane Thornton. This will help the students continue to develop the skills and knowledge needed for success during the practical assessments in the GCSE Drama course. They will study a range of rehearsal techniques to develop their performance, evaluating the impact these rehearsal techniques have on their performance in preparation for the GCSE written exam.



## Music

Pupils in Year 9 continue to study music until the end of the academic year. Over the course of the year, pupils opt to take GCSE music into Year 10 and much of the content covered in Year 9 builds contextual understanding and musical awareness for the GCSE Edexcel specification.

In Year 9, pupils learn about:

**The Blues:** the origins of Blues and Jazz. Pupils learn to perform the 12 bar blues with extended chords and walking bass line. An emphasis is placed on improvisation using notes of the blues scale.

**Film Music:** the evolution of leitmotif and its use in film; the art of 'mickey-mousing' and creating mood in film music. Pupils compose an underscore using Garageband software to a given film scene.

**Music for the Stage:** the study of musical theatre and the role it plays in the music industry today. Pupils learn to sing and play solo, chorus and duet numbers from a range of musical productions.

**Baroque Music:** placing Baroque music into the context of music history, its musical features and instruments. Pupils focus on the music by Vivaldi and J.S. Bach, namely concerto form and how it developed during the Baroque period.

## Physical Education

Physical Education During Key Stage 3 the pupils follow a programme which includes rugby, football and cricket for the boys and netball, football and cricket for the girls. Athletics and swimming are also available weekly for both boys and girls. Within weekly 'PE' lessons students will complete 6-week blocks of Physical Activity. We cover a broad range of activities throughout our 'PE' curriculum and within each activity we bed in GCSE PE terminology, so we are building a strong foundation and understanding of sport (tactical and technical) and physical activity from Year 7 through to Year 9 when students chose their GCSE options.

All of our 'PE' lessons are geared up to help students identify how to live a healthy and active lifestyle through the participation of sport and physical activity. Throughout the PE and Games lessons, students will experience different roles, such as coaching and officiating too, to develop their communication and leaderships skills. Co-curricular clubs run during both lunchtimes and after school for both competitive and recreational activities with fixtures taking place during the week and on Saturday mornings.

## PSHE/RSE

PSHE is taught as a timetabled lesson by allocated members of staff with a number of the themes being followed up in Assemblies, with outside speakers and in form times. The pupils follow a progressive course which builds on topics over the years. Topics covered in Year 9 include: Healthy Lifestyles, Respectful Relationships, Setting Goals, Employability, Options Choices, sexuality, norms and sexual content. In the Autumn Term the pupils are given time to look at their GCSE options choices and to investigate the various subjects in depth whilst considering possible future careers. Staff specialise in an area of delivery with the result being an expertise amongst the staff in approaching sometimes challenging topics. We ensure full coverage of RSE and the statutory expectations of the government guidance. As part of the PSHE programme, pupils investigate changing trends in the world of work, discuss the role of various jobs in society and practise negotiating skills to solve a problem.

Subject	Lessons/week	Subject	Lessons/week
Maths	8	Games	4
English	8	General Science:	
Library	0	Biology	3
History	3	Chemistry	3
Geography	3	Physics	3
RE	3	PSHE & RSE	2
French or	3	Drama	3
Spanish	3	Computing	3
Art	3	Music	3
Food/DT	3		
PE	2		