



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 their 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.

On the following pages you will find an overview of the topics covered in each subject during Year 9.

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 creates a solid foundation upon which to build their knowledge of Power & Conflict poetry in Key Stage 4.

Year 9 pupils study the following:

- War and conflict poetry through time
- A Shakespeare play
- A GCSE standard modern prose text
- 19th- to 21st-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 through Sparx Reader, an online reading platform designed to improve students' literacy skills and encourage a love for reading. We also recommend that pupils experiment with 19th-century classics. This creates a solid foundation upon which to build their knowledge of Power & Conflict poetry in Key Stage 4.



**DUNOTTAR
SCHOOL**

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 is not made until sufficient data has been gathered. 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. In the spring term, a large number of pupils have the opportunity to compete in the Intermediate Maths Challenge, a national competition. A selected few pupils will also compete in the UKMT team challenge. Each pupil 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

From the start of Year 9 pupils begin the GCSE course, with every class following the separate science course. Pupils are set at this point and have three specialist teachers, one in each science. At the end of Year 9 pupils in top set will continue with the separate science course and the rest of the cohort will proceed with combined science.

Each pupil has three lessons in each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics per fortnight.

Biology Topics

- Cell Biology
- Ecology & Biodiversity
- Photosynthesis

Chemistry Topics

- Atomic Structure & Periodic Table
- Bonding
- Atmosphere

Physics Topics

- Energy
- Electricity

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 Street Art. 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.

Computing

In Year 9 pupils 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 machine learning works and 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 different styles have on an 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 pupils 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.

Food & Nutrition

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

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

Pupils 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, Swiss roll, and creme brûlée. The course also aims to develop a lifelong interest in food, we include two independent food preparation tasks, designed to encourage the development of new skills, creativity and independence.

Foreign Languages

In Year 9 pupils have a choice of continuing with either French or Spanish. For those with a real passion for languages, they have the option to continue as a dual linguist.

In year 9, 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 attuned to the interests of growing teenagers such as celebrity culture and festivals and celebrations as well as being in line with GCSE specifications.

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, festivals, celebrity culture, social media and free time across all four skills. Role-plays, read alouds, photocards, dictations and general conversations are also used to develop speaking 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 21st century?'. Pupils will use a variety of GIS tools to investigate whether our traditional views of development are outdated through the use of gapminder, Dollar Street and ourworldindata.org amongst other sources.

Before Christmas we investigate urban areas and redevelopment including a fieldtrip to Battersea Power Station and a project based on applying sustainable, inclusive and accessible architecture and design to two sites in Redhill.

The new year leads us into an in-depth study of China as we consider 'Is China the world's next superpower?'. We pull all the geographical themes of the previous years together by considering its geography, population, environmental concerns, China's increasing global dominance economically along with its military strength and geopolitics. 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.

In the summer term, 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. An optional trip to Iceland is offered on rotation with other department's overseas trips.

History

The history curriculum in Year 9 builds on some of the topics covered in Year 8. Pupils will study a range of British and world history through the following enquiry questions:

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

In this enquiry students will explore the origins and brutality of the transatlantic slave trade and the growing abolitionist movement studying the roles of key individuals and groups that contributed to its eventual abolition in 1807.

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

This enquiry will consider how the lives of African Americans were impacted by the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation and will look at some of the key events and individuals involved in the Civil Rights movement.

Enquiry 3 - How have black people struggled against injustice in Britain in the C20th and C21st?

This enquiry will consider the experiences of racism and discrimination including key events such as the Bristol Bus Boycott and the Stephen Lawrence case.

Enquiry 4 - In what ways were the two World Wars similar?

This enquiry will focus on how the 2 World Wars were similar (and different) in the underlying causes of each conflict, the nature of the fighting on the front lines, life on the home front, the ways the wars were brought to an end and the major consequences that reshaped the world in their aftermath.

Enquiry 5 - Democracy & Dictatorship

An enquiry focusing on the differences between dictatorship and democracy with a focus on the rise of Adolf Hitler to power in Germany and life under Nazi rule.

Enquiry 6 - Who were the 6 million Jewish victims of the Holocaust?

This enquiry will focus on the Holocaust - the systematic, state-sponsored murder of 6 million Jewish men, women and children by Nazi Germany and its collaborators 1941-1945. Understanding who these victims were will include looking at the long history of antisemitism in Europe, the treatment of Jews in 1930s Germany and the development of the Nazis Final Solution.

Music

Pupils in Year 9 continue to study music until the end of the academic year. The importance of appraising, performing, and composing is reinforced throughout the curriculum and pupils are given regular opportunities to develop all these skills. Singing still holds an important focus within the curriculum and these skills will be developed throughout the year. Instrument skills are continued to be developed through the keyboard, ukulele or students bringing their own instruments in to lessons. Over the course of Year 9, 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 Eduqas specification.

In Year 9, pupils learn about:

Film Music: Pupils will have the opportunity to learn all about the evolution of film music. Pupils will get to grips with how to create the ultimate film soundtrack and explore what it takes to become a top film composer. Pupils will learn about the evolution of leitmotif and its use in film; the art of 'mickey-mousing' and creating mood in film music. Pupils will then have a go at composing an underscore using GarageBand software to a given film scene and watch their music come to life.

What Makes a Good Song: Pupils will learn about what it takes to create the ultimate song. Pupils will explore different genres such as pop, rock, musical theatre, blues and EDM (electronic dance music), learning how the structure of song works, developing chord sequences, creating their own melodic motifs and beats, as well as having a go at writing their own lyrics. Pupils will have the opportunity to create their songs on a mixture of acoustic instruments or electronically.

Development of Western Music: Pupils will learn about the history of music and look at specific features of Baroque music, Classical music, and Romantic music. This unit of work will teach them the historical context of each time period as well as musical features and key musical concepts that will support them if they decide to take GCSE music.

Outdoor Education

At Dunottar School, Outdoor Education provides a meaningful extension of the academic curriculum, preparing students for future challenges while reinforcing the Warrior Learning Traits of Aspiration, Creativity, Curiosity, Tenacity, Independence, Collaboration and Inclusivity.

In Year 9, the focus shifts towards applying skills with greater independence and preparing for expedition-based experiences. Students consolidate their environmental knowledge through deeper engagement with habitats and ecosystems, making informed decisions about their interaction with the natural world.

Bushcraft skills are applied with increased confidence, particularly in practical contexts that require planning and adaptability. Leadership and team-building are central, with students evaluating their roles within a team, developing leadership styles and giving constructive feedback.

Expedition skills form a key component of the year, including tent pitching, stove use, route planning and campcraft, providing preparation for Duke of Edinburgh and similar challenges. Wellbeing continues to underpin all learning, promoting reflection, resilience and the ability to switch off from everyday pressures.

By the end of Year 9, students are equipped with the practical skills, self-awareness and confidence to approach outdoor challenges with independence and a strong sense of responsibility.

Physical Education

During Key Stage 3 pupils follow a games programme which includes rugby, football and cricket for the boys and netball, football and cricket for the girls. Within weekly PE lessons, pupils will complete 6-week blocks of physical activity. Swimming takes place half-termly for all pupils in the autumn and spring term and athletics is embedded into the summer PE rotations, in preparation for athletics events and Sports Day. We cover a broad range of activities throughout our Physical Education curriculum and within each activity we embed GCSE PE terminology to build a strong foundation and understanding of sport (tactical and technical) and physical activity from Year 7 through to Year 9, when pupils choose their GCSE options.

All of our PE lessons are prepared to help pupils identify how to live a healthy and active lifestyle through the participation of sport and physical activity. Throughout the PE and games lessons, pupils will experience different roles, such as coaching and officiating, to develop their communication and leaderships skills.

Co-curricular clubs run at lunchtimes and after school for both competitive and recreational activities, with fixtures taking place throughout the week and on Saturday mornings.

PSHEE and Careers

PSHEE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education) 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 PSHEE programme, pupils also follow a varied Careers programme where they investigate changing trends in the world of work, discuss the role of various jobs in society and start to consider their rights and responsibilities in the world of work.

Religious Studies and Philosophy

Religious Studies in Year 9 is diverse and engaging. The curriculum explores important Theological, Moral and Philosophical Issues. The curriculum provides pupils with the opportunity to think critically about the world around them and apply the knowledge that they gained in Years 7 and 8 to important questions.

Unit 1 - 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.

Unit 2 - What does the idea of suffering mean to Buddhists?: Pupils will gain an understanding of the life and teachings of the Buddha. In particular they will learn about his teachings toward suffering and apply these to their own lives.

Unit 3 - Is death the end?: Pupils unpack and analyse the question of what happens when we die from both religious and secular perspective. Pupils will look at and evaluate several pieces of evidence including Near Death Experiences and Reincarnation Stories.

Unit 4 - Ethics and Morality: This unit offers pupils the opportunity to examine Ethics. Pupils will assess wealth and sex inequality and study religious views on social inequality. They will also study and examine different ethical system and evaluate their use.

The Course will be expanded through a visit to a Buddhist temple and Horniman Museum and Gardens. Pupils will also complete an Extended Learning Opportunity project while studying the afterlife.

Three-Dimensional Design

Three-Dimensional Design is delivered on a half-yearly rotation with Food & Nutrition. In Year 9, pupils design a nightlight using CorelDRAW, alongside electronics and woodwork processes. This project follows the full design process, from initial designer inspiration, helping to prepare pupils if they were to select this course for GCSE. In addition, pupils develop their design communication skills through a series of technical drawing exercises. They are then taught how to read engineering drawings, enabling them to manufacture a bottle opener.

Subject	Lessons per pupil	Subject	Lessons per pupil
Maths	8	Games	4
English	8	General Science:	
Library	0	Biology	3
History	3	Chemistry	3
Geography	3	Physics	3
Religious Studies & Philosophy	3	PSHEE & RSE	2
French or	3 or	Drama	3
Spanish	3	Computing	3
Art	3	Music	3
Food/DT	3	Outdoor Education	1
PE	2	TOTAL	60

Pupils choose to either do French or Spanish in Year 9.
Year 9 Food/ DT pupils choose to follow either Food or DT.