



ST HELEN &  
ST KATHARINE

**Year 9 Option Subjects**

**Course Information**

**September 2018**

## Introduction

As you move into Middle School, the shape of the curriculum will change slightly, giving you an element of choice and the opportunity to make some decisions about certain subjects. The aim is to ensure that you can pursue your particular interests, while still maintaining a broad range of subjects.

You will study a core curriculum, which includes English, mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics, history, geography, RPE, computer science, Spanish, a second modern language (French, German, Mandarin), PE and Personal Development. In addition to these core subjects, you will take three further subjects, one of which needs to be chosen from each of the following three option blocks.

<b>Block 1</b>	<b>Block 2</b>	<b>Block 3</b>
Art	Art	Ceramics
Ceramics	DT	DT
DT	Drama	Drama
Drama	Food & Nutrition	Greek
Music	Latin	Food & Nutrition
		Latin

## Making Your Mind Up

You should choose the subjects you like and enjoy doing, but it is a good idea to keep your options broad and balanced, so that in Year 9 you are studying a breadth of subjects, which will help you to decide your (I)GCSE options later on. However, the subjects you choose to take in Year 9 do not necessarily have to be the subjects you continue to study at (I)GCSE. With the exception of Latin and Greek, you can choose to do a (I)GCSE course in any of the other subjects you decide not to take in Year 9. For example, you can decide to do Drama for GCSE without having done Drama in Year 9. Please note that Food and Nutrition is not offered as a GCSE subject at St Helen's.

Mrs McDonald (Head of Art) recommends that you think very carefully about taking more than two out of art, ceramics and DT, in order to keep your curriculum broad and balanced.

I would also advise that, if you choose to drop a subject which you intend to take up again as a (I)GCSE option, you continue your involvement and enjoyment of that subject through your extra-curricular activities e.g. by joining a music ensemble, participating in a drama production and/or attending an art club. This way, you will keep your options open and your school experience will continue to be as varied as possible in Year 9, until you reach the time when you have to make decisions about your (I)GCSEs.

**Mrs K. Taylor**

Head of Lower School

## **Latin**

### **The Course**

The Year 9 Latin course is centred on life in Roman Britain, with some exciting intrigues surrounding a local chieftain and his relations with the Romans. The adventures of Quintus and Salvius continue, and we meet some new characters, including a comedy duo of soldiers. Early in the year we visit Bath, where we have an enjoyable time not only seeing the Roman Baths, but also reading inscriptions and handling artefacts from Roman times.

We continue to work on Book 3 of the Cambridge Latin Course supplemented with our own materials, and practising translation so that your language skills develop steadily. We also spend some time looking at the Roman army and culture in Britain.

Everyone is offered the opportunity to gain a formal qualification at the end of the year. This is a Level 1 Certificate in Latin offered by WJEC (Welsh Joint Examination Council). The examination consists of a comprehension paper and a translation paper, and is very straightforward. It will enable you to gain a national qualification, and also lays an excellent foundation for your progress towards GCSE in Year 11. This examination replaces your school examination.

### **Why take Latin?**

Many people find Latin fascinating; translation is like a puzzle, and the way the Romans behaved was often rather funny. The best reason for taking any subject is that you like it.

Girls in Year 9 have already completed nearly half the work needed for Latin GCSE. If you want to take this subject for GCSE or beyond, you need to keep it on in Year 9. There are lots of reasons why you might want to do this.

Latin improves your understanding of the English language and our whole civilisation, as well as showing that you can think logically and communicate clearly; both these are skills valued by universities and employers. Many European languages are based on Latin, so you will find modern languages easier if you take Latin as well. Universities welcome linguists and English students who have done Latin.

Roman law is the basis of our own legal system, so lawyers tend to study that first. Many legal phrases are in Latin, so it becomes easier to study law if you have taken Latin at school.

In the medical profession, Latin has considerable benefits. Some medical terms come from Latin, so you would find it easier to learn these if you understood the roots of the words. Also, doctors need to be able to understand people and communicate well with them. Latin includes studying language and society, which covers both of these points too.

In short, if you enjoy Latin, there will be a lot on offer if you continue in Year 9.

### **Miss D. Spain**

## **Greek**

### **The Course**

If you are enjoying Latin, you should consider taking up Ancient Greek as well. They are sister languages and quite similar in many ways. Greek has a different alphabet, but it only takes a couple of weeks to get used to this; once you have, it is possible to write all sorts of things in a script which is secret from most of the world.

We use a variety of course materials, all of which focus on developing the basic language skills quickly so that you can read some stories in Greek. We also spend some time looking at Greek words that come from English so that you gain a sense of the connections between the two languages.

Greek at GCSE offers you the opportunity to read some of the earliest and best literature in European culture: sections of Homer's *Odyssey* and Plato's *Apology*, for example. These are great works of literature, which not only have excellent stories but have also helped to shape the way we think in the western world.

### **Why take Greek?**

As well as being fascinating and fun, Greek GCSE is a highly respected qualification which few pupils have a chance to take. Anyone able to include Greek in their school studies is offering something beyond the norm. It involves the problem solving and communication skills so prized by employers, as well as the logical thought and cultural understanding sought by universities.

The Greeks invented democracy, history, drama and philosophy, out of which science and medicine evolved. Our most famous works of literature, art and architecture are based on Greek models. Studying their civilisation is the key to understanding the whole of western culture.

Greek is particularly useful for those studying medicine, English, theatre studies and history of art; it also combines very well with modern languages and subjects such as history and religion, philosophy and ethics. Greek often appeals to those with an interest in mathematics, music and the sciences too. Pupils who take Greek are also expected to take Latin.

### **Greek and Latin at GCSE**

For those who enjoy Classical languages and are good at them, we offer a special programme at GCSE whereby you can take both Latin and Greek GCSE as a single option. You will have four lessons in Years 10 and 11 to cover both subjects. If you wish to take this option, you must have done both Greek and Latin in Year 9. You can, of course, take Latin as an individual subject in its own right on three lessons per week. Greek GCSE is not offered as an individual subject in a separate block to the joint Latin and Greek option.

### **Miss D. Spain**

## Art

Art is a broad-based course which will give you foundation skills for GCSE Art and Design.

You will work from the following options: drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, Photoshop and mixed media.



You will:

- Look at how other artists and designers have worked with colour, sculpture and film and learn how to appraise their work.
- Keep a sketchbook to record your ideas and work towards finished responses to set themes.
- Experiment in your work with different methods and materials such as: acrylic painting techniques, collage, 3D materials, mixed media.

During the course there will be an opportunity to work with artists outside of the classroom to extend your understanding of art and design.

The course is suitable for you if you are:

- Keen to develop your visual skills.
- Creative, enthusiastic and imaginative.
- Willing to review your work and make improvements.
- Want to learn how to sustain an investigation over a period of time and reach a successful conclusion.

Homework will be set regularly which will give you the chance to complete or extend work set in class, or prepare for the following session.



**Mrs J. McDonald**

## Art and Design (3D Design)



3D Design is an exciting course that acts both as a general foundation for GCSE Art and as a practical skill base, ideal for ceramics and design in 3 dimensions in general at GCSE.

Students will not be confined to clay-work, but will keep a portfolio of two and three dimensional responses that will include sketch books to record, research, document, and develop their ideas. Homework will be regularly set which will give you the chance to complete or extend work set in class, or prepare for the following session.

There will be opportunities to:

- Develop observation skills, creativity and imagination.
- Extend techniques of hand building and modelling, and the use of a range of materials.
- Broaden knowledge of decoration and glazing methods.
- Learn how to cast using moulds and throw on the potter's wheel.
- Learn from other skilled professional practitioners and contextual studies.
- Make individual and adventurous responses to set themes.

3D Design is a fantastic area in which to make connections between subject areas, think imaginatively while developing practical dexterity, and achieve exciting final outcomes. It is also a good preparation for A Level Art.



**Mr B. Drew**

## Design and Technology

In Year 9 we will cover several Design and Make projects including making a mirror frame, salad servers and various jewellery projects.

We will explore many different materials and processes:

- CAD/CAM.
- Modelling: using card and foam to develop ideas.
- Mould making techniques.
- Lazertran for surface decoration.
- Wood: cutting, drilling, routing, laminating and finishes.
- Plastics: cutting and shaping.
- Pewter Casting.
- Exploring jewellery techniques: cutting and shaping metals such as copper and brass, soldering, anodising and mixed media techniques.
- Homework to support and develop design and theory work for the different projects.



Mrs C. Langston

## Drama

### What happens in Year 9 drama?

Years 7 and 8 are the time to learn the rules of theatre. Year 9 is the time to break them. Year 9 drama is about powerful, explosive, intense acting that pushes the boundaries of what you thought theatre could be.



### What will I learn?

You will learn psychological tricks for how to manipulate audiences, such as how the colour of light you choose affects the way a spectator enters the auditorium. You will create pieces of theatre that shock, terrify, and move audiences. You will learn that theatre is one of the most powerful tools we have, and that it genuinely *can* change the world. Through using contemporary rehearsal methods, you will work with the people around you to create exciting theatre of which you can be truly proud.

### How will it help me?

People choose drama in order to build their confidence and self-belief, to learn how to work with people, and to learn how to solve problems in a creative way. Often people want to learn to feel more comfortable performing to an audience or presenting in class: drama can help you to achieve all these things.

### Does it matter if I am not an experienced actor?

It does not matter how much experience you have had as an actor. You may have been in productions in or out of school, or you may not. You may have come from a school where you have never studied drama before. You may have a perception that you are not a good actor, or that other people are better than you. Perhaps you think that a person cannot be taught to act; this is not the case: Drama at St Helen's is a level playing field for everyone. Year 9 drama will show you just how good you can be, and you will be surprised when you realise how much you are capable of.

Finally, through studying drama you will learn who you really are, and there is nothing more important than that.



**Ms J. Watt**

## Food and Nutrition

Learning what is in the food we eat, how our diet is linked to health, and how to prepare delicious, nutritious food is a life skill. The course has been designed to build on the cooking skills and knowledge you learned in the lower school, but with more independent planning and a more global view of food and its impact on the environment.

Approximately two thirds of lessons are practical, or have a practical element within the lesson (for example, tasting locally produced food, or testing food for its sensory properties).

In the Michaelmas term, students will focus on preparing nutritious food for teenagers. In the Lent term, students work in pairs to design a two course meal using locally grown food as part of a regional cookery competition. In the summer term, we will look at 'street food' and prepare healthy versions of popular dishes from a variety of cultures.

Over the course of the year, students will:

- investigate some of the key environmental issues associated with food and farming today
- plan, prepare and present a two course meal using at least three local ingredients for possible competition entry
- investigate foods grown and produced locally
- develop new food preparation and presentation skills
- learn about the nutritional needs of teenagers
- investigate the physical, chemical and sensory properties of foods
- learn how to cook food safely and hygienically.

Food and Nutrition is not offered as a GCSE option for Years 10 and 11.



**Mrs B Alpers**

## **Music**

The study of music in Year 9 is designed to build on and extend the skills developed in Year 7 and 8. The course is suited to anyone who wishes to enjoy the study of a diverse selection of musical styles including western classical music, pop songs and music for special occasions.

If you enjoy music, it does not matter how advanced a musician you may consider yourself to be. The course will always approach each topic through listening, composing and performing, with the emphasis on getting to know about the key features of different musical styles before attempting to recreate them through group improvisation, composition and performance. We will also introduce music technology, working with music software programs and learning how to produce high quality compositions and recording of performances. We also hope you will be able to experience some live music, and to consider the many different ways in which music affects our daily lives.

The Year 9 course also forms an ideal basis for those who wish to continue to GCSE, but it is equally approachable to anyone who would like to study music for one more year only. As in Year 7 and 8, there is no set homework or examinations at the end of the year. The focus is on enjoyment, building confidence and broadening horizons; be prepared to experience the unfamiliar along with the music that you already know and love.



**Ms H. Rakowski**