



| Birkdale
School

*S3 HANDBOOK
2019/2020*



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From the Head ...

Dear Parents

We have issued this handbook to help parents and boys in the transition to the Middle School at Birkdale. Partnership between us is extremely important, and the information in these pages is designed to help you to be better equipped to play your part in that partnership. The handbook sets out to explain choices which need to be made, to describe the syllabus content of the different subjects, to give notes for guidance to you as parents, and to outline the wider curriculum, including Outdoor Education, Careers and Games. Next year we shall issue an S4/S5 handbook which goes into more detail about GCSE options, Careers, and which looks ahead to the Sixth Form.

The structures in the curriculum are designed to keep a careful balance of developing academic depth and keeping open subject options for GCSE and A Level study. Our curriculum at this stage is in line with the National Curriculum but not rigidly constrained by it.

In order for your son to fully benefit from Birkdale, he should make the most of the opportunities on offer and taking a full and active part in school activities. The school week runs from Monday to Friday, but a considerable number of activities are arranged on Saturdays and after school each day. We look to parents to support us in ensuring that pupils attend at these times when selected to play in matches, practices and other activities. So much of what makes Birkdale distinctive is dependent on the support of parents for what we do - not least in extra curricular activities, including drama and music.

I hope that you find this handbook helpful. The Senior Master for the Middle School is Mr Matthew Morton, and any pastoral matters should be directed in the first instance to your son's Form Tutor or Mr Morton. On curriculum issues Mr Phillip King (Director of Studies) will be happy to discuss your concerns, and I am always glad to meet parents to discuss more general matters.



Head

INTRODUCTION

S3 is the first year of the three-year Middle School programme. It is inevitable that GCSE examinations will become the focus of attention in this part of the school, and that academic achievement will be given a high priority. S3 is mainly made up of core subjects, with few choices to be made, but during its course boys will need to be thinking of their GCSE choices.

The National Curriculum is incorporated in many of the subject areas of Birkdale but we maintain independence when it comes to our curriculum. As you will see later, we can offer two Modern Foreign Languages plus Latin to boys who wish to specialise in this area or a Modern Foreign Language, Art, Computing, Drama, DT and Music to boys who wish to embrace creative subjects.

During the Middle School years, boys will be developing as individuals and will not only be learning academic skills, but will also be maturing as people. Birkdale provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities and classroom teaching aimed at developing the "whole person". Many of these are detailed elsewhere, but it is important to mention that boys are expected to take advantage of these opportunities. There are S3 and S4 camps, compulsory for all, the opportunity to be involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, and the usual range of sport, music and drama; all of them will encourage personal responsibility, teamwork and leadership skills. Several boys in S4 and S5 will be invited to be monitors, thereby learning to exercise that responsibility. All will receive guidance on Careers and future choices at GCSE and A level, prompting them to have greater awareness of their strengths and areas for development and promoting decision-making skills. All will receive teaching about personal relationships and sexuality. Finally, there is the enormous variety that Birkdale offers through the clubs and societies programme. Do encourage your son to take a full part in these opportunities.

THE CURRICULUM

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Senior Master with responsibility for S3, S4 and S5 is Mr Matthew Morton. Mr Morton looks after the personal and social development of the boys within his care with the help of the Assistant Head of Middle School and the form tutors. Boys stay together as forms throughout the Middle School and, as far as possible, each boy keeps the same form tutor for the whole of the three-year period. The three form groups are unstreamed, although boys are setted in Mathematics and Science.

Most of the S3 Curriculum is common to all boys. This core consists of:

Mathematics	5 periods per week
English	4
Biology/Chemistry/Physics	6
Geography/History/RE	9
PE/Games	4

The remaining 12 periods occur as three option blocks. One subject is chosen from the Language block, and further subjects chosen from blocks 1 & 2 (totalling 8 periods). Pupils wishing to study two Modern Foreign Languages may choose French and either German or Spanish.

Language Block (4 periods)	Blocks 1 & 2 (total 8 periods)*
French	French (4 periods)
German	Latin (2 periods)
Spanish	Art (2 periods)
	Computing (2 periods)
	DT (2 periods)
	Drama (2 periods)
	Music (2 periods)

* Pupils who find their study of English difficult will be allocated 2 extra periods of English (a total of six periods per week). These pupils will, therefore, only need to select subjects for **six** periods from Blocks 1 and 2 (rather than 8).

Examples of possible combinations

A keen linguist might study German, French and Latin.

A pupil wishing to fully embrace the Creative subjects might study French, Art, Computing, DT and Music.

Details of the content and aims of the courses offered to S3 boys are given in the next few pages. Boys will be asked for their choices in the first half of the summer term.

THE CURRICULUM STRUCTURE S4 – S5

During S3 of the Senior School boys must decide which combination of subjects they will study in S4 and S5. These are very important decisions which can affect career choice at a later stage. There is much advice available through published material, subject teachers, form tutors, and from senior members of staff. The following suggestions may be useful:

1. Most boys will want to study subjects which they enjoy and are good at.
2. Boys should not generally allow themselves to be influenced by how much they like a particular teacher or the decisions of their friends.
3. Boys should try to maintain their freedom to choose careers later by keeping as many options open as possible.
4. Boys should strike a sensible balance between the Humanities, Languages and Creative subjects.

The aim of the S3 Careers course is to give boys the knowledge and confidence to enable them to make sound decisions.

There will be more details about GCSE subjects, the blocking system and advice about the combinations of subjects which are encouraged and discouraged in the S4 and S5 Parents' Handbook.

The current programme consists of:

COMPULSORY (CORE) SUBJECTS

All pupils study the following subjects to GCSE:

English Language
English Literature
Mathematics
Science (*either 2 or 3 GCSEs*)
One Humanities subject (Classical Civilisation, Geography, History or Religious Education)
A Modern Foreign Language (French, German or Spanish)

In addition, the following non-examined subjects are taken:

General Studies, including: Careers, Economic Awareness, Political Systems, Health Education, Substance Abuse and Religious Education.
Physical Education
Games

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

Pupils may select any **two** of the following subjects to study to GCSE:

- Art
- Classical Civilisation
- Computing
- Design & Technology (Electronic Products) or Design & Technology (Resistant Materials)
- Drama
- Geography
- History
- Latin
- Music
- Religious Studies
- Second Foreign Language (French, German or Spanish)
- Additional Support

The option subjects are arranged into blocks to accommodate as many wishes of the particular year-group as possible. Nine or ten subjects are thus studied by pupils to GCSE.

The provision of one or two less popular subjects is dependent upon there being sufficient demand.

ACADEMIC WORK

School work, homework and coursework are all essential elements of the education programme at Birkdale. We monitor progress by assessing homework and class-work and report to parents and boys on grade cards, at Parents' Evenings and in end-of-term reports. There are examinations at the end of each school year.

GRADE CARDS

Grade Cards are issued once or twice per term on the dates indicated in the school calendar. Grades are given for attainment and effort. High effort grades can be achieved by any pupil; attainment grades relate to achievement. As boys move into S4 and S5 the grades begin to translate to the GCSE performance that might be expected given continued progress.

A summary of the grade criteria for S3 is given below.

ATTAINMENT

Grade Comment

A Excellent

B Very good

C Good

D Weak

EFFORT

Grade Comment

O Outstanding He gives of his best all the time.

V Very Good He does all he should and more.

G Good Concentrates and work well most of the time.

S Satisfactory He does not try as hard as he could.

U Unsatisfactory He is seriously underachieving.

Boys are interviewed by Form Tutors and/or Senior Staff after each set of grades and targets are set for improvement where necessary. U grades for effort are treated seriously and a range of sanctions, which includes a daily report card, is used to focus attention on a boy overcoming his problems.

HOMEWORK

Homework is set as indicated in the homework timetable issued at the start of the school year. Some teachers may set a piece of work to be completed over a period of time. Homework may be written, research or to learn for a test.

All homework should be recorded in the pupil planner. These are issued to all pupils.

If homework is incomplete, late or unsatisfactory then the following sanctions may be employed:

1. Repetition of unsatisfactory work.
2. Repetition of unsatisfactory work on **red-lined paper**.
Red-lined paper must be signed by a parent and the form tutor before being affixed to a boy's exercise book.
3. Detention after school on a Tuesday evening.

Staff can also choose to give an academic detention at lunchtime.

The importance of homework cannot be exaggerated; boys are learning the patterns of

self-discipline which will serve them well in GCSEs, A levels, at university and employment. Parents can help by:

1. Checking the pupil planner. In S1 and S2 boys are asked to obtain a parent's signature each week. This measure is relaxed in later years but parents are encouraged to maintain an interest in the work set; boys who find organisation difficult may be asked to re-adopt the "sign each week" procedure.
2. Supporting the disciplinary procedures applied to boys who fall below the standards expected.

REPORTS & PARENTS' EVENINGS

There is a written report at the end of each term, unless there has been a Parents' Evening during the course of the term. The current programme of reports and Parents' Evenings is:

	Christmas	Easter	Summer
S1	Evening	Report	Evening
S2	Report	Evening	Report
S3	Report	Evening	Report
S4	Evening	Report	Evening
S5	Report	Evening	
L6	Evening	Report	Evening
U6	Report	Evening	

Parents worried about the progress of their son may contact the appropriate Senior Master responsible at any stage. This especially applies after a report from the School.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION

The Outdoor Education programme is structured so that pupils who wish to do so can complete the expeditions section of the Duke of Edinburgh Award, but the main idea is that they are all introduced to a variety of situations in which they can develop qualities such as initiative and leadership. The programme will centre on camps in S3 and S4, preceded by training sessions which take place after school. The camps will involve activities which are designed (within carefully planned safety considerations) to be physically and mentally testing: the emphasis is on self-reliance and leadership. The programme will culminate in a two-day small group expedition during S4 camp.

S3 Camp

The aim is to develop group skills and to give experience of small group leadership.

The activities will probably include:

- a. Training in navigation and campcraft
- b. Small group walk into a tented base camp
- c. Local orienteering exercise
- d. Cooking own food
- e. Small group walk, out to designated rendezvous
- f. Adventure activity at rendezvous (e.g. rock climbing, canoeing)

Timing

- a. After school sessions in the second half of the Easter Term and in the first weeks of the Summer Term
- b. One Games afternoon
- c. Camp on Friday/Saturday, a weekend before Half Term in the Summer Term

Location: Peak District

S4 Camp

The aim is to develop leadership skills to a level at which pupils can help lead a small group on a two-day expedition.

The activity will include:

- a. Pre-camp briefing
- b. Safety/briefing exercise on site
- c. Local navigation exercise
- d. One-night camping expedition
- e. Adventure activity training days

Timing: Five days.

Location: Pensarn, Wales

In recent years the *Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme* has become a significant part of a pupil's wider education, with a majority of S3 taking the Bronze award, and a number going on to take the Silver and Gold awards. The work will provide a good basis for the expedition section of the Bronze award but pupils will need to show the development of skills and interests together with their willingness to be of service to the community to fulfil other requirements of the scheme.

CAREERS

Careers guidance is given to all boys in S3. Our aim is to help them to make well-balanced choices of options which keep as many career doors open as possible. The boys are guided in their decision-making in the following ways:

They consider and discuss with the Head of Careers and their Form Tutor the options system and what they need to find out about a proposed subject choice. Emphasis is placed on the essentials of good decision-making. The boys are encouraged to assess their own strengths and areas for development so that they have an idea of the broad areas of work which they are likely to find satisfying. They are introduced to the school careers library, its resources and systems, and encouraged to use this independently to follow up any career interests or simply to browse. They also have a session in IT to familiarise themselves with some of the career software which is provided for their on-going use. This provides a foundation for the Careers Guidance programme which each boy follows in S4 and S5.

There is a Careers talk within the Information evening in the Easter Term to which parents and boys are invited. On this evening we explain the advice programme, which gives guidance to boys from S3 until they leave Birkdale. Pupils in S3 and above are encouraged to attend our biennial Careers Convention at which they and their parents can consult approximately 100 advisers representing a wide range of professions, employers, Gap Year organisations and Higher Education Institutions.

THE S3 CURRICULUM

ART & DESIGN

Aims

In the Third year boys can choose to take two periods of Art per week as an option subject. The year leads naturally to GCSE but is also of value to all boys in that practical skills can increase and a deeper appreciation and understanding of Art can be experienced.

Content and Skills

This year will be a period of exploration and experimentation. The projects undertaken will have a more personal edge preparing the boys for the demands of the GCSE course. Underpinning the course there is still a good deal of exposure to established Art and attention paid to objective study.

Assessment

Work is given the following grades: **Attainment: A** Outstanding work that is hard to improve upon, **A/B** Very good standard, **B/C** Good/quite good standard and **C** Satisfactory standard, **D** Below Satisfactory, **E** Unacceptable. **Effort: O** Outstanding/Excellent Develops work independently in the light of research and advice. Demonstrates a wider interest in the subject. Pride taken in presentation of work. Personal best for the pupil. **V** Very good- work is well presented and it is evident that much time and care have been devoted to it. Will persevere with a problem until it is resolved. **G** Good – shows evidence of time, care and effort appropriate to the task. **S** Sufficient – the minimum effort required to avoid being asked to repeat the work. Improvement is expected in line with comment made by the teacher. **U** unsatisfactory reasons for this include: insufficient work/incomplete work, care not taken in presentation.

Skills

Drawing, painting and printmaking skills will be built upon and enhanced in preparation for the GCSE course.

BIOLOGY

Aims

In S3 Biology, we make a start to the GCSE course. As well as learning some of the fundamental theoretical work, we also develop practical skills and mathematical skills through completion of several of the required practical tasks.

Content and Skills

The topics covered in S3 Biology are as follows:

- Cell structure, including a microscopy required practical and calculations of size/conversion of units
- Cell transport, including an osmosis required practical
- The digestive system and digestive enzymes, including required practical work on food tests and the action of amylase on starch required practical
- Infection and how the body responds

The topics covered are common for both GCSE Biology and GCSE Trilogy Science so that decisions on courses taken at GCSE can be made at a later date.

Assessment

Pupils sit an in-class assessment at the end of each topic, approximately one every 9 – 10 weeks, as well as an end-of-year assessment in examination week.

Skills

Four out of the ten required practical tasks are completed this year, as well as the analytical and mathematical skills to process data generated from these. Pupils will also learn how to work safely in the laboratory and to complete group work effectively.

Trips/Extra-curricular activities

Pupils are welcome to attend weekly Biology clinics for support with this work.

CHEMISTRY

Aims

In S3 the students embark on a course which will continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of some important topics in Chemistry, building on their studies from the Lower School Science course. Part of this course includes topics from the GCSE specification and will also develop important practical skills.

Content and Skills

The following topics are covered in S3:

Introduction to mixtures, compounds and changes of physical states

Methods of separation

Chemical formulae and equations

Metals and their relative reactivity

Rates of reaction

Introduction to atomic structure and bonding

Assessment

Assessment is carried out through homework exercises and a series of end of topic tests. There is a more formal end of year exam taken in the summer term.

Skills

Students who follow the GCSE Chemistry course will develop many skills, including scientific literacy, numeracy, problem solving, interpreting data, communication, practical skills and ICT.

Trips/Extra-curricular activities

Students can attend the weekly Chemistry clinic. Students may be selected to represent the school in the RSC 'Top of the Bench' Chemistry Competition.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Aims

The S3 course in Computer Science aims to give the students a taste of several key areas of computing and software development. There are elements of User Experience design (UX) and some digital literacy skills (Vector Graphics) in addition to exposure to programming using both blocky and text-based languages. The course provides a good transition towards work at GCSE level in a less formal program. The emphasis is on creativity and skill-building rather than a heavy reliance on theory and learning of computing fundamentals.

Content and Skills

The course is broken down into a number of discrete units. These are arranged to encourage a progression of skills

1. Mobile App development using App Inventor

Students will initially learn about the Classic Model of Computing and how it can be applied to every gadget or system that they will have experienced. They will then develop design skills aimed at producing attractive and effective User Interfaces for mobile phone apps. As the unit progresses they will build up their ability to code a phone app using the blocky language in the App Inventor suite of tools.

2. Vector Graphics creation with Illustrator

Students will create a portfolio of increasingly sophisticated vector graphics scenes using a professional graphics design package (Adobe Illustrator.) They will use techniques that relate to computer graphic manipulation such as use of primitives, Boolean operations and layering and sequencing.

3. Python programming for Game Development

Students will build on the programming introduced in mobile app development by using the Python programming language. They will rapidly build up their ability to work with screen Input/Output to create some simple text-based games. Fundamental coding skills such as looping, decision-making and re-use through functions will be covered in this work. Extension work will introduce the PyGame library that allows for the use of 2D graphics to recreate classic arcade games or develop their own designs.

4. Unity Game Development

Students will extend their ability to program games by venturing into the realms of 3D worlds. They will use the Unity professional game development environment and control their game using the modern Object Oriented programming language C# (C sharp). In addition to further exposure to text-based coding, students will learn effect asset management skills and explore avenues of interest independently. Students are encouraged to develop their games to work using Virtual Reality (VR) hardware and to test these using the equipment available in the class.

Assessment

Each unit of work is assessed using a mixture of portfolio work and an end of topic mini-project. The quality of homework submitted throughout the course is also taken into consideration (homework tasks often feed in to the evidence submitted as part of a project.)

Mini-projects Assessed

1. Randomised Mobile App (e.g. Magic 8 Ball or Harry Potter sorting hat)
2. **Substantial Mobile App (e.g. Venue entry tracker for doormen)**
3. Vector graphics creative challenge (e.g. Valentine's card)
4. Text-based game in Python (e.g. Yahtzee simulator)
5. **Retro arcade game in Python (e.g. platform game or collecting game)**

Students will also sit a Summer exam paper that will have equal weighting with the main projects (underlined above) in arriving at an overall grade for the year.

Skills

Students who participate fully in this course can expect to develop the following skills

- Appreciation of applying the Classic Model of Computing
- Experience of designing effective user interfaces for mobile phone apps
- Work with a variety of inputs and sensors using a blocky language
- Creating and using robust test plans to check apps work correctly
- Peer and self-review of designs and created software products
- Competent use of graphics primitives and complex shapes including use of the Bezier Pen and 3D techniques such as rotate/extrude/revolve
- Fundamentals of programming in a text-based language
- Use of a game loop to control and present interactive images on screen
- Understanding of event-driven programming and use of event-handler functions
- Integration of 3D terrain and models to create VR games

Trips/Extra-curricular activities

Students will take part in the Bebras Computational Thinking challenge in November of S3. Students are also encouraged to participate in other programming-related events such as the Perse Braben Cup, TCS Oxford Computing Challenge and Alan Turing Cryptography Competition.

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

Aims

The department broadly adopts the KS3 National Curriculum subject content and provides some National Curriculum assessment opportunities. This approach is adopted to allow pupils to have abroad knowledge of different material, and specialist areas within Design and Technology.

The curriculum is mostly centred on a one project per term approach. A certain level of flexibility is tolerated wherever possible to allow for a project to be completed should it overrun.

In S3 students will reinforce skills gained at S1&S2 and prepare pupils for GCSE in Design and Technology. The year is split into two with focused projects aimed at preparing students for D&T (Resistant Materials route) or D&T (systems route).

The theory content taught should be appropriate to the project content and appropriate written work will be set in line with the school homework timetable, providing regular opportunity for assessment of each pupil.

Content and Skills

The S3 projects are designed to visit separate D & T skills areas whilst maintaining wherever possible the design approach. Certain projects lend themselves more to a focus task approach, however design tasks are built into these projects at various stages to reinforce the design and make principles.

S3 – Projects-

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Reaction tester- | This is aimed at showing students what might be involved if they were to take the Design and Technology systems option. Students are taught more in-depth electronics and systems. The project focusses on a Programmable Interface Controller or 'PIC'. These small components can be programmed with different inputs and outputs to form tunes and light different LEDs. The project is then housed in a 3D printed case and a laser cut top, to the students own specification. Students will learn about simple programming and flow diagrams. |
| USB Desk light- | This project is designed as an introduction to the Design and Technology resistant materials route. Students look at the process of aluminium casting to design and make a base for the light. They then use workshop skills and equipment to make an multi adjustable frame for a usb powered desk light, using a range of different materials. |

Assessment

To allow for greater practical workshop time, each project has a homework booklet. Not all homework set is appropriate to the practical lesson experience. Marks are awarded in line with the marking and assessment policy.

The marks you get for each piece of classwork/homework will be for Attainment (how good it is) and Effort (how hard you have tried).

The Attainment grade will be from A-G and the Effort grade will be 'O' to 'U'.

Skills

The broad skills areas we aim to cover through KS3 projects are as follows:

- The design and make principle
- Health and safety awareness
- Graphics skills
- Metal based skills
- Wood based skills
- Electrics and electronics-based skills
- Circuit Wizard
- Solid Works 3D modelling CAD software
- Experience of CNC machinery (Laser cutter and 3D Printer)
- Investment aluminium casting

DRAMA

Aims

S3 can be a period of exploration and experimentation since the boys have shown some commitment in choosing the subject. S3 Drama will build on the skills already acquired in the Lower School and prepare the pupils for the Key Stage 4 GCSE curriculum.

Content and Skills

The year leads naturally to GCSE Drama, but is also of value to all pupils. Both practical skills and confidence can increase, and a deeper appreciation and understanding of Drama can be experienced.

There is a free choice of stimulus material and play texts throughout the year, giving flexibility to choose the most appropriate texts and themes for students. Boys will study theatrical genres such as Melodrama, and Comedy, as well as studying the Willy Russel Play, Blood Brothers.

Assessment

Pupils' practical performance and creation skills will be assessed each term. This will offer opportunity to review the progress of each individual in-line with marking criteria from the GCSE Drama (9-1) course. In the Easter term and beyond, boys will also be assessed on their writing and evaluation of Drama to offer further insight for the pupils into the requirements of the GCSE course.

Skills

Confidence	Meeting Deadlines	Organisation	Empathy
Group Work	Leadership	Confidence	Planning
Research	Written Evaluation	Verbal Evaluation	Listening

Trips/Extra-curricular activities

Students are offered the opportunity to develop Live Theatre Evaluation skills in-line with the requirements of the GCSE course. This will usually involve attending at least one professional production, analysing and evaluating its success.

All students are offered the opportunity of auditioning for at least two school productions in any academic year, as well as taking part in Acting & Performance Skills Club.

ENGLISH

Aims

We run our own assessment programme in S3, covering all the key skills areas. Two assessment papers are set at different stages through the year, alongside a series of coursework assignments and oral assessments. We believe these are a better preparation for GCSE and will make our pupils more familiar with the demands of the courses in English and English Literature that they will all follow in S4 and S5.

While there is a common framework of assessment, each class teacher structures what is done according to the nature of each specific group. What follows is an outline of broad aims and principles and a summary of the assessment procedure. They are much the same as for S1 and S2.

STAFFING AND TIMETABLING

English in S3 is taught in four parallel mixed ability classes of eighteen or nineteen students. They will be taught for four periods per week.

In addition, we identify a number of pupils for whom extra time spent on core literacy skills will be more valuable than studying a greater range of subjects. These will typically be those with the lowest overall English scores in S2. This small group will have the advantage of extra coaching: two periods of English together each week, in addition to their mainstream English lessons.

Content and Skills

ATTAINMENT TARGET 1: SPEAKING AND LISTENING

The flexibility of English as a subject means that drama and small group discussion fits easily into the pattern of work. Students are able to give talks and participate in interviews and group exercises.

ATTAINMENT TARGET 2: READING

Much material is covered in class - extracts, articles, short stories, novels, plays and poems are all read and discussed, both for their own sake and as a stimulus to written work. The department has a number of class sets of novels that can be read and studied by the whole group together. All boys are required to do some reading in their own time (a minimum of one book per half term) and to take part in at least two 'Reading Reviews' each year. In these informal class sessions, each boy brings the books he has read and talks about them, sharing ideas and recommendations with others so that overall progress can be monitored. **We expect boys to read a novel of their own choice for forty minutes a week at home.**

SHAKESPEARE SET TEXT:

The set text for the age group will probably be *Henry V*, *Julius Caesar* or *The Merchant of Venice*, though if local theatres offer a production of a suitable alternative, this may be chosen instead.

ATTAINMENT TARGET 3: WRITING

Boys write regularly and have their work read, corrected and commented on by their teacher. The types of writing attempted will reflect the range of what is read, both fiction and non-fiction: stories, poems, play scripts, discussions, statements of individual viewpoints and attempts to persuade the reader; factual accounts; basic journalism; autobiographical accounts; letters both formal and informal. There is one 40 minute homework per week for writing; this may take the form of essays, or research/note-making.

Assessment

ASSESSMENT OF WRITTEN WORK

Each boy has a folder, kept in school, in which final drafts of work are stored.

COURSEWORK - These pieces will be started in class and completed at home to a specified deadline or else completed in the IT suite with help from the teacher. These tasks are set and marked by the class teacher. Each piece may be word processed and should be the equivalent of two or more standard homeworks.

TIMED ASSESSMENTS - These will be completed under examination conditions. One member of the department is responsible for grading each of the tasks across the four teaching groups.

ATTAINMENT TARGETS 4/5: PRESENTATION

This includes spelling and handwriting. Each timed assessment will be marked for content, but will also be awarded an SPG mark (spelling, punctuation and grammar) out of 5. Anyone a 1 or 2 will be followed up by the class teacher.

FINAL GRADING – SUMMER TERM

The timed assessments and two pieces of coursework will be used to provide an overall percentage and grade for the year.

Skills

Students will:

- gain in confidence as fluent speakers of English;
- use spoken language appropriate to audience, task and situation;
- demonstrate empathy, both as listener and speaker, in a variety of social contexts - working in groups to share ideas, for example.
- enjoy reading in a variety of genres - prose, poetry and drama; and styles - fiction and non-fiction;
- recognise both the meaning and implications of what is read;
- appreciate the literary quality of texts;
- read aloud with confidence and fluency.
- maintain a fluent, legible and mature style of handwriting;
- write accurate English, and to understand how the language works;
- develop breadth of approach and organisational skills;
- use the school's ICT resources;
- be able to produce material both under time constraints in examination, and over a longer period where redrafting is possible;
- appreciate the range of written styles available (persuasive, reflective, discursive, fictional narrative etc) and use written language appropriate to the task in hand and for the intended audience.

Trips/Extra-curricular activities

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Drama, creative writing and debating are the department's main extra curricular activities. We also encourage boys to join school theatre trips in Sheffield and further afield when relevant. Opportunities exist for boys to take part in national and local competitions for essay and letter writing, poetry and journalism. They can be on the editorial team of the department's in-house magazine (*In Between the Lines*) or contribute as many articles as they wish.

GEOGRAPHY

Aims

The S3 year is the one during which most pupils develop an ever-increasing awareness of, and interest in, their surroundings at both local and global levels. The enquiry learning style is continued so that boys are encouraged to ask questions so that both knowledge and skills are acquired which will form a sound basis for the GCSE course.

Content and Skills

You will learn from the real world, about the real world. Geographical skills and concepts are developed through the study of a series of topics, many of which stimulate a large amount of debate and discussion. These include the topic of World Development, which looks at over-population and the quality of life in the developing world and how trade affects development. We look at the factors and impacts of conflicts and give the boys the opportunity to develop their intellectual curiosity through independent research on some of these topics. Natural hazards and disaster are studied. We look at the causes, impacts, and how people and countries respond to these hazards with a focus on how they differ from contrasting areas of the world. In the summer term we focus on the rising Superpowers of the world, including Russia, Brazil and some Middle East countries.

Assessment

Students are assessed regularly at the end of each topic in the form of a class test with exam style questions. There will also be a formal summer term exam in Geography.

Skills

Geography in S3 will provide students with a range of skills which are transferable between subjects.

The following skills are developed throughout the year:

The ability to work in a team and individually

The use of ICT, GIS.

Graphical and cartographic representation

The development of various skills in communication & literacy

Statistical analysis of large amounts of data

The development of research skills

Analytical skills and the ability to interpret maps & diagrams

Discussion, role play, decision making and problem solving

Map reading skills are further developed and have a particular significance in this year, since most boys are involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme which has a strong outdoor/environmental element. The Geography staff are closely involved in such activities.

Trips/Extra-curricular activities

In S3 students have the option to join one of our overseas residential field trips such as Iceland.

HISTORY

Aims

The aim of this course is to teach about major events in the past between the years 1746 and 1991.

Content and Skills

In this course the pupils will study the major events and issues in British History from 1746 to modern times including the Industrial Revolution, the British Empire and the Right to Vote. The pupils will then study the Second World War which is a topic that starts with the First World War and finishes with the Cold War.

Assessment

There is an assessment on Public Health in January worth 20% of the overall mark for the year and an examination on The Second World War in the summer term worth 80% of the overall mark for the year.

Skills

This course develops a range of transferable skills such as the ability to analyse, evaluate and pass judgement a long side the acquiring of historical knowledge.

Trips/Extra-curricular activities

There is a Middle School Film Club as well as a trip to the Imperial War Museum in Salford Quays.

LATIN

Aims

During the year we cover book II of the Cambridge Latin Course.

Content and Skills

Latin helps you to

- Expand your English vocabulary by looking at Latin roots.
- Learn vocabulary in other European languages.
- Develop awareness of how languages work.
- Understand the influence of Roman civilisation on modern culture.

This section of the course looks at Britain under the Roman occupation and another province of the Roman empire ,Alexandria in the first century.

The stories allow us to investigate an exciting range of cultural and historical issues such as what it was like to be taken over by a military power and the advantages and disadvantages of life in a multi-cultural city.

The civilisation topics cover the rebellion of Boudicca and the intellectual and scientific discoveries made at the university of Alexandria.

Assessment

During this year there are two certificates to be achieved. These are awarded by Cambridge Latin Course to recognise levels of competence in the language and understanding of the civilisation.

Trips/Extra-curricular activities

We visit the museum at Doncaster examine and handle the archaeological remains of a town that began because of the Roman occupation of Britain.

A Greek club runs as a lunchtime activity for boys who would like to become acquainted with Classical Greek .

MATHEMATICS

Aims

The aim of the S3 course is to build upon the foundations laid in S1 and S2. The work is set in relevant contexts wherever possible and some GCSE topics are introduced during the year.

Content and Skills

There is now more focus on algebra, including manipulation of expressions and solving equations - leading to simultaneous equations. The boys also learn the gradient-intercept form for the equation of a straight line as well as some basic trigonometry.

Assessment

The boys' progress is continually assessed through regular setting and marking of homework. They will also have a progress test at the start of each half term.

Skills

In order to prepare for GCSE, problem solving skills are developed. The boys are made to think carefully about which particular piece of Maths knowledge they need to select and use in order to answer a question.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Aims

In S3, teaching of Modern Foreign Languages aims to build on the foundations of language learning laid down in S1 and S2. Boys can opt for French plus one of either German or Spanish with the majority of students studying two languages. The teaching focus is on developing the breadth and depth of pupils' competence in listening, speaking, reading and writing, based on a sound foundation of core grammar and vocabulary. It develops pupils' ability to understand and communicate personal and factual information that goes beyond their immediate needs and interests, developing and justifying points of view in speech and writing, with increased spontaneity, independence and accuracy. The course provides a suitable preparation for further study at GCSE and beyond.

Content and Skills

With emphasis on independent learning and progression for all, the course books in S3, *Allez* (French), *Zoom* (German) and *Mira* (Spanish) are designed to provide for learners of all abilities, offering graded activities and differentiated resources in all four skill areas (listening, reading, speaking and writing). These resources have been designed to ensure full coverage of the Key Stage 3 Programme of Study for Modern Foreign Languages and allow for a smooth progression to the new GCSE examinations. In keeping with the requirements of the new GCSE examination taken in S5, the courses provide a sound grammatical basis on which to build and there are opportunities throughout for translation and transcription. There is a strong focus on the use of authentic source materials to enhance the learning experience, broaden pupils' vocabulary base and foster intercultural awareness. There are opportunities for extended reading in the Target language. Each of the six specialist language teaching rooms is equipped with interactive whiteboards with high quality sound systems. Use of the IT room provides access to a variety of language study programmes as well as a range of authentic internet resources and videos in French.

With an increased emphasis on accurate pronunciation and the ability to use the foreign language more spontaneously in both the new KS3 guidelines and the new GCSE, there are many opportunities throughout the S3 course to further the development of spontaneous speech in and out of the classroom. Use of the Target language in the classroom is actively encouraged between pupil and teacher (use of TL mats) but also between pupils.

Assessment

In the style of GCSE assessments, summative assessments have been designed to focus on the key language of the corresponding text book units, while recycling and interweaving high-frequency language and out-of-topic key language. This has been done to emphasise the transferability of vocabulary and structures and to build student resilience in working out meaning. In the summer examination, marks have been evenly distributed across listening, reading, speaking and writing (mirroring GCSE) with 25 marks available in each section and an overall point total of 100. The mark scheme has been designed to value and credit student outcomes. The listening, reading and writing papers are designed to provide an increased level of challenge as pupils progress through the questions.

Trips and Extra-curricular activities

The department offers bespoke trips abroad for all 3 languages and participation is strongly recommended. The French and German departments run a joint trip to Alsace / The Black Forest and in Spanish, pupils have the opportunity to discover Cantabria.

MUSIC

Aims

The Third Year Music course is designed with two aims in mind. Firstly, to enable any student interested in Music to further develop their skills and enjoyment of the subject; and secondly to begin to lay a foundation for those who wish to continue and take Music at GCSE. All are welcome!

Content and Skills

Topics covered in the Third Year include:

- Theme and Variations
- Popular Music (ranging from early jazz to the present day)
- Music in the Media (looking at the types of Music you see in everyday life)
- Modal Music.
- Dance Music

Assessment

Practical work involves writing and recording your own pop song, composing music for adverts and cartoons, descriptive music and experimental composing. There is also the opportunity to create a project on a musical topic of your choice (e.g. Hip-Hop, Reggae, etc...).

MusicFirst will also be used to set and assess homework tasks, and this means students will continue to have access to a range of music composition software packages at home.

Skills

As in S2, there is an emphasis on practical and creative work whilst continuing to look at a broad range of musical styles. New compositional techniques will be taught which will help prepare students for the more demanding

Extra-curricular activities

All S3 pupils are encouraged to get involved in the Music Department's extensive range of Extra-curricular activities – request further details from your music teacher!

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND GAMES

Aims

Physical Education and Games in the Third Year are designed to build upon the foundation work of the Lower School syllabus. The objectives of improved motor skills, organic development, self-realisation, social competence, moral development, and aesthetic appreciation are continually fostered by the PE and Games programme.

Content and Skills

During the Third Year, pupils will experience a variety of team games including rugby, football, cricket, basketball, hockey and volleyball. Pupils will also participate in the individual sports of swimming, climbing, cross-country, tennis and athletics. They will also study the principles of training and the value of exercise through a health-related fitness course.

Assessment

Pupils in the Third Year will be assessed in both their Practical Performance and their Cognitive Performance. This will take place in the core curriculum sports that take place during PE and during an assessment lesson at the end of each block of sport, usually lasting 5-6 weeks.

Extra-curricular activities

The extra-curricular programme is viewed as an important extension of the department's curricular programme. A comprehensive and varied range of activities and team practices are provided which are intended to develop those skills, attitudes and behavioural patterns necessary for both individual and team success. School teams are selected and compete against both independent and state schools in rugby, football, cricket, cross-country, tennis, hockey and basketball. There are also clubs for badminton, indoor football and table tennis.

Inter-House competitions are held for all of the major school sports and pupils are expected to play a full and active part in representing their Houses.

PHYSICS

Aims

In S3 the students make a start on their studies of the GCSE Physics specification. A key aim of the S3 year is also to develop important practical skills, and several required practical activities will be carried out.

Content and Skills

The following topics are partially covered in S3:

- Energy
- The Particle Model
- Waves
- Motion

Please note that the content covered is common to both the Physics and Trilogy specifications, so the choice of GCSE course taken can be chosen later.

Assessment

The students take regular progress tests throughout the course (approximately every 5-6 lessons). An end of year exam is taken in the summer term.

Skills

Students who follow the GCSE Physics course will develop many skills, including scientific literacy, numeracy, problem-solving, interpreting data, communication, practical skills and ICT.

Trips and Extra-curricular activities

Students can attend the weekly GCSE Physics clinic.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Aims

RE in S3 explores certain ultimate questions about life and existence, the kind of questions raised by religious responses to the world: is there a God, is there life after death, what is a human being and how should humans be treated? Our aim is that pupils learn to reflect on these questions critically and coherently and start to formulate their own responses. There will be a strong emphasis on guiding pupils towards moral integrity, valuing other human beings, learning to be tolerant and respectful.

Term 1 (/2)

Content and Skills

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

PART 1: INTRODUCTION – ‘AUTHENTIC’ AND ‘INAUTHENTIC’ BELIEF

Pupils are first encouraged to be ‘authentic thinkers’, making their own decisions, and then ‘authentic believers’, responsible for their own belief commitments.

PART 2: ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

Pupils learn and debate some of the classic arguments for and against God’s existence.

Term 2 (/3)

EXPLORING MORAL PHILOSOPHY 1: HUMAN RIGHTS, WAR AND PEACE

Pupils learn to appreciate the human values at the core of our civilization. We look at the way certain moral choices can ‘dehumanise’ human beings and encourage pupils to come to reasoned conclusions about war and the use of violence.

Term 3

EXPLORING MORAL PHILOSOPHY 2: RELATIONSHIPS

Pupils use the framework of existential ‘authenticity’ to analyse moral choices in human relationships. They look at modern consumer society and assess its worth in terms of its effect on human relationships.

CONCEPTS IN EASTERN RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY

Pupils empathise with an alternative mind set to their inherited Western perspective on reality, thus helping them to understand a Western perspective more clearly.

Assessment

Students are assessed on their ability to explain their own thoughts in both classwork and a series of creative homework tasks. There is an end of year exam designed to test a pupil’s philosophical understanding.

Skills

RE is about developing critical thinking skills and learning how to express ideas clearly and persuasively.