



Friends' School Lisburn



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YEAR 8

**CURRICULUM
BOOKLET**

2023 - 2024



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to give an overview of the content of the subjects pupils study in Year 8 and the assessment procedures used to reinforce and consolidate classroom teaching.

At the start of the year, pupils are given a timetable, with different teachers for most subjects. Year 8 pupils study all of the subjects listed in the table below. The School week is divided into 45 periods, each lasting 35 minutes. Where appropriate, pupils are timetabled for double periods in their practical subjects. A typical timetable for a pupil in Year 8 is shown below.

Subject	Number of Periods each Week
Art and Design*	2
English with Drama	6
French	5
Games	2
Geography	3
History	3
Home Economics	2
Information Technology	2
Learning for Life and Work	2
Mathematics	6
*Music	2
*Physical Education	2
Religious Education	2
*Science	4
*Technology	2

Sample Timetable for a Year 8 Pupil

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	Collect	Collect	Collect	Collect	Games
2	French	LLW	Science	IT	
3	English	French			
4	History	PE	History	History	Mathematics
5	Art		Technology	French	Music
6		Mathematics			
7	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
8	Mathematics	Geography	Mathematics	English	LLW
9	RE	English			Geography
10	Science	HE	French	Mathematics	
11			English	RE	

Pupils are taught in Collects for all subjects with the exception of the asterisked subjects for which they are divided into 8 groups to take account of the practical nature of the subject and the need for smaller teaching groups. Pupils are taught the Northern Ireland Curriculum and are given every encouragement to achieve the highest personal academic standards through challenging and engaging lessons.



Teaching and learning strategies employed in the classroom provide pupils with appropriate opportunities to develop and display their creativity, independence, collaboration and encourage acquisition of the necessary skills for effective learning.

SKILLS

The skill of effective Communication is at the core of all learning and is developed in a progressive way through Reading, Writing, Talking and Listening in English lessons and reinforced across all subjects. Pupils are encouraged to take care with their Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation and to take time to look over their work to ensure it is at all times neat, with legible handwriting and in line with each subject teacher's expectations.

Similarly, pupils' ability in Using Mathematics, taught primarily through Mathematics, is developed and consolidated across the curriculum. Meetings between Friends' School KS3 Co-ordinators of Literacy and Numeracy and those from our feeder primary schools ensure meaningful transition for pupils to School.

The School has a well-structured programme to ensure pupils consolidate their existing ICT skills. In addition to teaching ICT as a discrete subject on the curriculum, pupils' skills in Using ICT are developed throughout a range of subjects across the curriculum in Key Stage 3. In Year 8, pupils have the opportunity to acquire and develop their skills in the use of: 3D CAD (Computer Aided Design) in Technology; Music Technology (GarageBand); working with sound in French; spreadsheets in Junior Science; and Desktop Publishing in subjects such as English and RE.

The Northern Ireland Curriculum has identified the development of Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities as central to enabling pupils to become effective learners across all subjects. These skills encourage pupils' ability to think both critically and creatively and to develop personal and interpersonal skills and dispositions which help them in their learning. The five skills are:

- Managing Information
- Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making
- Being Creative
- Working with Others
- Self Management

Pupils acquire all five skills through all subjects, but focus on the development of the skills that are most appropriate to the content of each subject.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

Assessment is an integral part of the school curriculum. Teachers assess pupils' progress in Year 8, both in an on-going way, referred to as Assessment for Learning, as well as in a summative way, which is Assessment of Learning. Pupils' progress is also reviewed by pastoral staff to identify both strengths and areas for improvement and to assist pupils in personal target setting and action planning as part of their Progress File development.

Parents are invited to meet with subject teachers during the autumn term. A letter with an accompanying interview card will be sent out a few weeks prior to the **Parent-Teacher Meeting** and parents will be able to make appointments to speak with subject teachers, Collect Teachers and Year Teachers. However, parents are encouraged to contact the pupil's Year Teacher, at any time, should they have particular concerns about their son/daughter's progress.



Assessment for Learning

Assessment for Learning is very much integrated into pupils' everyday learning. It is part of the teaching process used to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers use techniques that best suit the nature of the work being assessed and the purpose of the assessment. It may, for example, take the form of independent or group tasks, class discussion, homework, project work, small class or unit tests or teacher observation of pupil participation as an individual or as part of a group.

Assessment of Learning

In most subjects, pupils have summative or end of topic/unit tests, many of which are standardised across the whole year group.

School Examinations

Pupils sit School Examinations twice a year when they are off timetable for a week. Copies of the school examination timetable indicating changes to Break, Lunch and end of School times are posted on the website in the Academic, Internal Examination timetable area a few weeks before the start of the examinations.

Target Setting and Action Planning

In keeping with the rationale of the NI curriculum, pupils are also encouraged to be fully involved in their learning, to review their work and set targets for improvement, thereby fostering self-responsibility and independence.

Each year, following the Winter and Summer School examinations, pupils take time in their Collects to review their performance in all subjects and set targets for improvement. More details are given in the Homework Planners pupils receive in September.

PREPARING FOR SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS

There are a number of ways in which parents can support school and help pupils prepare for school examinations. In lessons, subject teachers indicate areas on which pupils should focus revision, spend time preparing them for the content, sharing with them the types of questions they might be asked and giving guidance about how to set out answers and the timing of answers. Pupils are also encouraged to use online platforms where they will find activities to help them with the topics they are covering in all subjects as well as exams information, revision guides and activities to assist with their revision. Collect teachers will also spend time discussing ways to revise and assisting pupils with the preparation of a revision timetable.

Pupils should try to revise in an on-going way throughout the year and **testing of knowledge is an essential part of any such revision**. Parents can also assist with revision by helping with the organisation of notes and materials, talking pupils through their learning, creating a quiet place to study and encouraging the removal of mobile phones during revision time.

Each pupil is issued with a **Homework Planner** at the beginning of the school year in which to keep a record of the work set and to organise time at home for completing homework. The Homework Planner should be brought to all subject classes. Collect teachers check the pupils' Homework Planner regularly and parents are also encouraged to check that homework is being done and to initial the Homework Planner each week. In Years 8 – 10 some teachers may make a note in the Homework Planner when a homework has not been done or a pupil is not bringing the correct books or materials to class.

The Homework Planner also asks a pupil to record, on a regular basis, their achievements and involvement in extra-curricular activities, both inside and outside School. It also encourages them to record and reflect on their examination performances. Within the Homework Planner there is Study Skills guidance providing tips on personal organisation, homework and revision skills. We encourage parents to work alongside pupils as they move through the guidance contained in this section in their Extended Collects. We value the establishment of good study habits in the junior years so that pupils can take increasing responsibility for their work later on.



Homework

Homework given will vary to reflect subject content and the individual subjects in this booklet will give some indication as to what form it will take.

Parents can support their son or daughter's learning at home by encouraging pupils to:

- aim to provide a suitable place in which pupils can do their homework
- help their children to develop good study habits by encouraging a regular time for homework
- make it clear to pupils that they value homework
- expect deadlines to be met
- check the Homework Planner carefully

REPORTING

Parents receive a report of their child's performance following both the winter and summer examinations. The Winter Report reports the pupil's own percentage achievement and the year average percentage for each subject. Parents also receive a numerical descriptor (1-5) of their child's class effort (E) for each subject. In addition to percentage marks reflecting performance, year average and a grade in the May/June exams, the end of year Annual Report provides parents with a comment on pupil progress and achievement over the year in each subject. Your child's Collect teacher will also write a summative comment which will include a focus for improvement.

As required by the Northern Ireland Curriculum, the subject comment in 5 different subjects in the end of year report will include an evaluative reference to pupil progress in each of the 5 Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities.

The table below indicates which subjects will report on each of the five skills in Year 8.

Problem Solving	History
Being Creative	Drama (through English)
Self-Management	Home Economics
Managing Information	Junior Science
Working with Others	Learning for Life and Work (LLW)

Art and Design

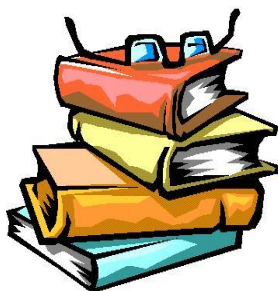
In Year 8, pupils study Art and Design for two periods each week.

Through the Year 8 programme pupils are given opportunities to develop confidence in their creative, intellectual and artistic abilities

The programme is organised in a series of units designed to introduce pupils progressively to new skills and experiences with both practical and conceptual elements. Within these units, opportunities are provided for pupils to work with a broad range of media and techniques, including: drawing and painting, collage, printmaking and mixed media. Appropriate learning experiences are offered to support all pupils in the development of their creative skills.

Throughout the year, pupils are encouraged to develop their time management and organisational skills to ensure they prepare adequately for class, as work completed at home forms an integral part of units and is assessed regularly to inform winter and summer assessments. The department reports through continuous assessment.

This use of contextual and historical sources supports all units. Pupils research background and related information to increase their understanding of their own work and the cultural contribution which Art and Design makes to their lives. They are encouraged to make use of the School VLE Google Classroom, by accessing resources which support and extend their learning, in particular to inform the research tasks which are completed at home. Pupils are encouraged to take part in a range of competitions and subject related activities throughout the year.



English

Pupils in Year 8 have six periods of English per week; one of these is a dedicated Library period. Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure and to develop their curiosity and interest in learning through the use of fiction and non-fiction texts, including magazines, newspapers and comics. Drama is delivered through the teaching of English; pupils practise the skills of speaking, improvisation and dramatic role play. Pupils read and study two class novels during the year and have the opportunity to read a drama text and study poetry from a Key Stage 3 Poetry Anthology.

Through planned schemes of work for each novel, pupils engage in a range of reading, writing and talking and listening exercises. Spelling, punctuation and grammar is addressed through the set texts, focusing on vocabulary building and the transference of literacy skills. Assessment is embedded in each unit of work, with an emphasis on extending reading, writing and research skills, and on accuracy and fluency in written and oral expression.

Pupils are able to access the year plan and information on internal exams through the learning platform Google Classroom. Guided by the classroom teacher through the completion of classwork and homework tasks, pupils are encouraged to self-evaluate and target set. All tasks are marked to a common mark scale.

Pupils should be working to develop a very good vocabulary and be able to read, write and communicate purposefully and with insight, exhibiting sophistication in expression, punctuation and language usage. In order to support and develop this aim, pupils will complete weekly spelling, punctuation and grammar tests. They will be given a revision booklet to support improvement in this essential area.

The two class novels for this year are *Goodnight Mister Tom* by Michelle Magorian, and *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins. Additionally, pupils will study the play *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens.

All pupils are encouraged to enter the many competitions the English Department supports, including the Lisburn Arts Annual Creative Writing competition. Additionally, pupils will have many opportunities to display and exhibit their work in the classroom and in the school magazine.

English Department Extra Curricular activities include:

- Junior Drama Club
- Public Speaking
- Junior Debating
- World Book Day Events

Geography



All pupils in Years 8, 9 and 10 take Geography. Both the Physical and Human aspects of the subject are covered through topics such as Rivers, Glaciers, Africa and Map-skills

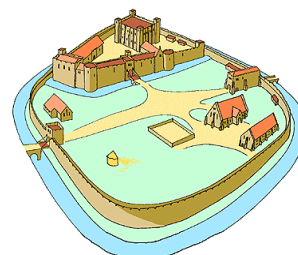
Pupils make reference to the Oxford Geog. 1, 2 and 3 textbooks for Key Stage 3, along with a wide variety of other teaching resources. They also work in a quality learning environment, all of which will hopefully foster a lifelong interest in geographical study and the world around us. Pupils can expect at least one written homework per week and are encouraged to maintain high levels of organisation and presentation throughout. Assessment is on-going throughout the year in the form of standardised end of unit tests and examinations. Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities are developed through active learning strategies within the classroom. In Year 8 there is a specific focus on Managing Information and pupils have a range of opportunities to develop further their proficiency in ICT. Google Classroom the school VLE is widely used within the department for consolidation and revision purposes.



History

All pupils study History in Year 8 and continue with the subject in Years 9 and 10. For 3 periods per week, pupils cover the following topics: The Foundations of History; the Roman Empire; and Medieval History covering the early Norman Conquest of England and the later Middle Ages. As a facilitating subject, Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities are developed through varied and active learning strategies within the classroom and there is specific focus on the skill of Problem Solving using primary and secondary sources. Pupils use a variety of recently adapted resources and textbooks to supplement classroom activities. To enhance their learning, they make use of ICT facilities for research and presentation, and at the end of the year there is an opportunity to visit Norman sites in County Down.

Homework generally involves research, reading and writing tasks. There is one formal written homework per week and parents can help by checking the presentation of this homework. Each unit of work contains key assessment areas which involve recording marks and setting targets for improvement. In the History Department, pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in monitoring their own progress. Pupils can make use of Google Classroom for revision, assessment and extension activities.



Home Economics

Home Economics is compulsory at KS3 and in Year 8 pupils study the following topics: What is Home Economics?; names and uses of the main items of kitchen equipment; the use of measuring equipment in the kitchen; kitchen safety; the importance of good personal hygiene when handling food and how to prevent contamination of food during preparation, cooking, serving and storage; healthy eating; the needs of people through the life cycle; methods of cooking food; and consumer education, to include methods of shopping and impulse and planned spending. The work is divided into six units and cookery practical is an integral part of the course.



Pupils cook once or twice per unit of work. Booklets are provided and pupils have the use of textbooks in School. Standardised homeworks are set each term. Additional worksheets, PowerPoint presentations and embedded videos will be available on Google Classroom to help reinforce learning covered in class.

Information Communications Technology

The primary aim of the Key Stage 3 curriculum is to both stimulate an interest in digital technology and provide pupils with the core knowledge and skills they need to ease the transition from Key Stage 3 into GCSE and beyond. This curriculum should also enable pupils to make more of an informed choice when they come to choose the subjects they study at both GCSE and A Level.

In Year 8 pupils are introduced to a number of key e-safety issues which they may encounter as their online presence increases over the next few years. They also cover a number of core computing topics in Year 8 e.g. computational thinking, providing a sound foundation upon which to build knowledge and understanding of more complex programming-related theory topics later in Year 10 and further up the school at GCSE level. Pupils also have the opportunity to work with some tactile programming technology using the revolutionary BBC Microbit, introduced by the government as part of a nationwide strategy to stimulate interest in coding.

In Year 8, pupils have two periods of discrete ICT covering the following areas:

- Introduction to IT in Friends School Lisburn
- E-safety (Healthy screen-time and Cyberbullying)
- Computational Thinking
- Desktop Publishing
- Spreadsheets
- Bits and Bytes
- Number Systems
- Basic Computer Hardware
- HTML and Web Design
- BBC Microbit

Learning for Life and Work

All pupils in Key Stage 3 study Learning for Life and Work comprising the contributory strands of Citizenship, Employability and Personal Development. Learning for Life and Work aims to help pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of the challenges and opportunities that they may encounter both inside and out of School. It also enables them to comprehend the different values, attitudes, needs and

perspectives of their own and other communities. Additionally, it aims to develop the skills, attitudes and values necessary for independent thinking, informed decision making and responsible actions.



Learning for Life and Work is delivered in both timetabled classes and during special Learning for Life and Work days, at specified times throughout the year, when a range of professional agencies come into School to deliver aspects of the programme. This allows the expertise of external providers to support our curricular provision. In Year 8 pupils learn through a composite programme of Citizenship and Personal Development, one period per week, with a separate Employability period in Year 8. The skill Working with Others is highlighted in all year groups

Mathematics

Pupils in Year 8 have six periods of Mathematics each week and are taught in their Collect group. Teaching aims to both consolidate and develop the work covered in Key Stage 2 and to introduce pupils to some new mathematical concepts. Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities are developed through active learning strategies within the classroom. In Year 8 there is particular focus on Algebra and Problem Solving. Number, Shape, Space and Measure and Data Handling are also taught. Pupils use booklets of printed notes which include exercises and extension material. A maximum of three homeworks may be set per week, and every other week pupils will be asked to complete an online homework using the Dr Frost Maths platform. Pupil progress is assessed through fortnightly topic tests, all of which have a few questions from any topic covered so far in Year 8. Pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in monitoring their own progress.



All Year 8 pupils are encouraged to enter the UKMT Junior Mathematics Challenge. Additionally, pupils will have many opportunities to display and exhibit their work in the classroom. Year 8 pupils are encouraged to join the Junior Mathematics Club which aims to extend and enrich the taught curriculum. Revision material is available on the FSL Maths Google Site and pupils are encouraged to make use of this to further support their learning and develop their skills of independent study.

Modern Languages

All pupils begin studying French at the start of Year 8, and continue with the language in Years 9 and 10. In addition, pupils take either German or Spanish from the beginning of Year 9 and continue with this second language in Year 10. In Year 8, pupils have 5 periods per week of French and cover the following topic areas: family life, pets, where they live, describing their house, classroom objects and commands, weather, clothes, days of the week, months of the year, sports and other activities. Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing skills are all developed. Pupils also acquire grammatical concepts such as genders, plurals, adjectives, possessive adjectives, regular -er verbs and some irregular verbs. Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities are developed through active learning strategies within the classroom. In Year 8 there is specific focus on the skill of Self-Management.

Pupils use Encore Tricolore, Book 1. To supplement this course, they use ICT packages such as Just Click and a variety of online resources. Pupils are encouraged to consult Google Classroom regularly. On this platform, they will find a range of supplementary activities and quizzes to help them to consolidate their learning experiences. Revision exercises, as well as guidance for exams, are also available on Google

Classroom. Homework generally involves vocabulary learning and completion of reading and writing tasks. There is generally one formal written homework every week. Parents can help by checking the presentation of their son/daughter's homework and assisting with vocabulary learning. Vocabulary is tested regularly and is revisited frequently in order to assist pupils with their learning. Pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in monitoring their own progress and they complete evaluations of their performance after both January and May examinations. Pupils complete Reading and Writing examinations mid-year and again at the end of the year, when they also sit Listening and Speaking tests.

We celebrate the European Day of Languages with a Year 8 Food Fest, sampling foods from France, Germany and Spain in September.

Music

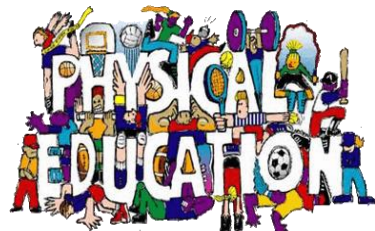
With an emphasis on practical music making, students in Year 8 begin to read music and perform using keyboards, boomwhackers, African drumming and percussion. They also engage in listening activities and conducting. During their double period each week, they have opportunities to improvise, compose and work together in groups. In the second term, pupils use the iMacs to compose on GarageBand.

A range of instrumental and vocal tuition is available in school, allowing pupils to pursue graded music examinations. Many of our Year 8 musicians participate in Wind Band, Orchestra, Junior Choir, Folk Group, String Ensemble and Junior Guitar Ensemble and Jazz Band. The course aims to promote pupils' self-esteem, self-expression and encourage active and enjoyable music making. Google classroom provides information about pupils' homework, their assessment breakdown and also revision guidance, leading up to Summer and Winter exams.



Physical Education

In Year 8, pupils have two periods of Physical Education and two periods of games each week. In Physical Education, pupils participate in and learn the value of health related exercise, swimming, gymnastics, fundamental movement skills, dance, athletics and softball. During games lessons boys are given opportunities to play rugby, hockey and cricket and the girls sample hockey, netball, cricket, dance, rounders, tennis and badminton. Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities are developed through active learning strategies, with specific focus on the skills of Thinking, Problem Solving and Decision Making.



Within all Physical Education lessons pupils learn how to work effectively as a team, work independently, work with a partner and to communicate their own knowledge of Physical Education to other pupils.

Religious Studies

Pupils have 2 periods of Religious Studies each week in Year 8. They are encouraged to form and develop their own views and to listen and respect the views of others. In Year 8, pupils cover the following topics: introduction to the Bible; Quakers; Jesus and Other people; Islam and Environment and Animal rights. At all times the Department seeks to make the course relevant to life today. Pupils use a variety of in-house work booklets and online resources. Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities are developed through active learning strategies.



Homework involves research, writing and presentation tasks and parents can help by discussing homework tasks and encouraging pupils to plan and work independently. Google Classroom is used within the department for consolidation, revision and to submit homework. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their work and effort throughout the year.

Science

Pupils in Year 8, study a composite Science course and as they move into Years 9 and 10 are taught the three Sciences of Biology, Chemistry and Physics separately. In Year 8 pupils have four periods of Junior Science a week and study the following topics: Being a Scientist, Cells and Living Systems, Forces Everywhere, Solutions and Separations, Human Reproduction, Acids and Alkalis and Earth in Space. All Junior Science topics are delivered using departmental booklets, which pupils complete as they progress through the topic. All laboratory-based skills are developed through these topics and a range of Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities are developed through the different active learning approaches used in the classroom. Junior Science works with the Mathematics department to deliver a numeracy task within the topic of Being a Scientist. Regular homework tasks give pupils the opportunity to develop some of the key skills that have been the focus of classroom teaching and at the end of each topic there is a standardised assessment. Pupils are encouraged to keep a record of their marks and to set targets for development. Pupils are encouraged to use Google Classroom to enhance their learning. Here, they can access additional notes/information and links to websites to assist with their preparation for the winter and summer examinations.



Technology

In Year 8, pupils engage in the following activities; learning to work safely in a workshop, using plastic to manufacture a key ring, using graphic design skills to represent ideas in three-dimensions, designing and making a desk tidy and using Computer-Aided Design (CAD). The Year 8 course is designed to be fun and engaging and seeks to contribute to the development of Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities. In particular, we focus on the skills of Being Creative, Self-Management and Working with Others.

Pupils use A4 folders to store their work. Booklets are distributed for all topics covered during the year. Pupils are expected to place these safely in their folders which can be stored in the Technology and Design Department when not needed for work at home.

Homework is usually in the form of work sheets or a graphics task and if a major graphics task is set, pupils will usually be given three to four weeks to complete it. Pupil work during term time is assessed and usually includes practical, graphical and written work.

Teaching and learning resources can be accessed on Google Classroom and it is also used as a means of collecting in pupil work. Development of pupil numeracy and literacy is addressed through various practical and non-practical.

