

Calday Grange Grammar School



Year 8

Subject Curriculum Statements

2019-20

Art

This year in Art we have explored a full range of technical skills as well as creative thinking skills and how to develop a narrative in a personal response to an idea or theme. The first Unit 'Character Design' was an exciting opportunity to create a unique character that has personality. Students adopted the 'Design-evaluate then refine' workflow. We took these designs into different three-dimensional solutions, enhancing and manipulating their character using a mature range of manipulation and construction skills. We animated these models and explored the process of producing a short film in a number of ways including Stop-Motion and cell animation. The second unit investigated architectural structures. In this project, students learned how to bash model structures together as a starting point to create a 'Dystopian' world. We looked at fascinating places and spaces around the world like Kowloon. This then led to designing a structure that combines a number of formal elements together, form, space, structure, light and purpose. Students researched various architects and investigated modern contemporary designs like the 'Vertical Forest' in Milan. At the end of this process, students had an architectural design ready for construction using modelling foam board, with some having the opportunity to redesign an aspect of their local area – working to an architectural brief. The final project is one where we are focusing on aspects of self-identity and different ways to explore and experiment with a range of materials and techniques including photography and digital manipulations. It is an opportunity for students to guide their own learning and experimentation, developing the independent working skills so vital to the next stage of their Art education. For those students continuing with Art to GCSE level next year, this project will continue over the summer holiday.

Biology

In Year 8, your son has covered several interesting aspects of Biology. The first topic he studied was how the digestive system works, including the role of enzymes. He learned about microbes and learned how vaccination helps our immune system defend us against disease. During Spring he looked at variation in living organisms and the role of DNA. The final topic, which was mainly covered as part of remote learning, was relationships between living organisms in ecosystems. When your son starts Year 9, he will begin studying the first topic of the GCSE Biology AQA specification, a link to which is here: <https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/biology/specifications/AQA-8461-SP-2016.PDF>. Your son will be in mixed ability groups of approximately 24 students, which we will review throughout the year.

Chemistry

In Year 8, your son has covered chemistry topics that built upon prior Year 7 learning and provide an important foundation for GCSE study in Year 9. The first topic studied was particle theory followed by earth and atmosphere. This was followed by energy and materials, acids, bases and salts and during remote learning your son has been working through the periodic table unit. These

topics will be revisited in greater depth during the GCSE chemistry course starting in Year 9. Your son will be taught in mixed ability groups of approximately 24 students next year, which will be reviewed throughout the year.

Chinese - MEP

Work set so far up to closure: Jinbu1 4.1- Jinbu2 chapter 3 done practice and prepare for Hurdle Test: Writing and Speaking

Overview of the work set since closure: divided into 3 parts, see below

- non-Chinese activity, for wellbeing
- Chester Walking Tour, youtube (30min)
- London's spy history, youtube (28min)
- WildEarth Safari Live stream, youtube (regular live session)
- Easter video (woman befriended with a bee, youtube)
- Hogwarts Digital Escape Room game (created by Youth Services Librarian, Peters Township Public Library in McMurray, PA)
- Power of Kindness calendar (Red Cross)
- The Isolation Diaries (National Youth Trends)

Culture:

- songs on YouTube with Chinese characters/pinyin/English subtitles
- Silk Road Week colouring competition
- Online seminar on Chinese language and culture (2 lecturers from Lancaster Uni)
- Chinese recipes
- info on online dictionaries
- FutureLearn course on Chinese pronunciation and tones (3 weeks, 2 hrs/wk)

Language specific:

- study skill-Chinese, youtube videos
- Week 33: read out and record the story you wrote
- Week 32: 3 tasks on Duolingo
- Week 31: create a story book based on the feedback on a previous written work
- Week 30: revise/correct the writing task, based on teacher's feedback
- Week 28/29: retell a story, in writing, depicted on an animated youtube video
- Week 26/27: 5 quizlet sets

Computer Studies

All year 's have studied computer science for 3 lessons a fortnight, this report is to outline what topics and activities our students have completed so far this year and the plans we will put in place in the coming weeks.

At the beginning of the year we started with the Cyber Security unit. This gave the students the opportunity to learn about how organisations protect their networks with security measures such as firewalls and encryption, they also learned how to look after their own devices, the ways in which cyber criminals can attack and how to protect themselves. At the end of the unit we found that the students really enjoyed the research task we set which gave them a choice on which famous hacking events they wanted to research and write about.

We then moved onto our Digital Creation unit which taught our students about project based working and roles within a team whilst allowing them to be creative and to develop a mobile app of their choosing. The theme was an app beneficial to the community and finished with a dragons den style presentation and the opportunity to enter a national competition which could give the students the opportunity to present their app at the Vodafone head office. One of our apps was selected as the entry for the North-West region and although the final was cancelled we will find out this month if the team Go-Recycle placed in the top 3 in the country. As a department we believe that this unit was and will continue to be an introduction to the way in which many careers in technology start and has taught critical project management skills.

The third unit of the year was Data Representation. For this we study the smallest matter in the digital world – bits and binary and look at how computers use these to represent images and sound.

Having started learning how to program in python in Year 7, we continued this initially whilst we were in school with our text based adventure game unit – looking at the evolution of adventure games from the 80's through to creating their own. Once lockdown began the students continued their game design through python using CodeCombat online. This platform is a fantastic tool to engage our young programmers. On completion of each course on CodeCombat the students are awarded a certificate, each of which will be printed and presented to the students when we return to school.

On 8th June we set out to broaden the curriculum, stretch the students cultural base and expand their learning methods. The summer 2020 Tokyo Olympics were due to take place this summer and choosing a topic with this heading can serve as an excellent vehicle to promote engagement and broaden learning across the whole school subject curriculum. Therefore, we gave students several Olympic-themed tasks to complete from each faculty. The computer science tasks were designed to engage and challenge students' abilities in key areas of the topic

In the coming weeks we plan for our Year 8 students to complete the Bronze iDEA award which will give them not just enhanced digital skills but also enterprise and employability skills that will become vital future and means that even if they aren't studying computer science at GCSE they will still have a digital qualification that they can put on their cv in the future. They will also receive a certificate which will be presented to them later on in the year.

Drama

Students had explored the genre of physical theatre, Shakespeare and storytelling prior to the lockdown.

During the physical theatre project, students were taught about how we can tell stories without the use of spoken word instead relying on the way we use our bodies to express an emotion or articulate a story. Working individually, in pairs and in groups of four, students were taught the mechanics of a series of lifts, levels and balances that could be used to tell a story. The key skills of control and exaggeration were embedded into the learning to encourage the students to push themselves physically whilst remaining safe and disciplined. Once these skills had been taught students were tasked with retelling the story of a battle incorporating these taught skills as well as encouraging new sequences of shapes to be created. Students were assessed on their ability to collaborate within the pairs and groups as well as on the range of controlled skills articulated in the final performance. After the assessment the students did an extra four lesson project in stage combat in which they were taught 4 basic moves to enable them to choreograph a believable yet controlled fight. Please don't let them tell you it was play fighting, we work really hard to teach them it is stage combat!!

During the Shakespeare project students study scenes from Romeo and Juliet, Julius Caesar and Macbeth. Focus was placed on encouraging the students to feel comfortable in speaking the verse as well as making sense of the scenes and in doing so highlighting the subtleties of each one. With Romeo and Juliet they explored stage combat, in Julius Caesar how to stage a mob riot and in Macbeth how to create the supernatural element of the Three Witches. After exploring each scene as a group, students were asked to choose one of the three scenes to rehearse in more detail. They were tasked with learning their lines, making sense of the Shakespearean verse, developing their own role and staging a complete scene.

Prior to the lock down we had begun to look at the stories from 1001 Arabian Nights and we were teaching the students how to dramatise a written story. Key skills explored were physical theatre, narration, structured improvisation and multi roling (where one actor plays multiple roles). Three stories were being studied practically in lessons after which students would have been tasked with choosing their favourite one within a group and over four lessons begin to create their own dramatised re telling of it.

Within the Year 8 curriculum is a series of written evaluations in which students completed a series of questions reflecting upon the practical project they had just completed. These written tasks asked the students to analyse their own development as well as evaluating how they used their practical skills in performance.

DT

September – March

Your son has covered several projects since the start of Yr 8 and up until the school closure due to the pandemic. Students looked at electronics as part of the course, learning about a basic circuit and its components, as well as the manufacture of a PCB. Students gained skills in soldering components to a PCB and testing their circuits. A case was designed and manufactured to build upon skills from Year 7, looking at the introduction of new tools/machinery, for example line bending polymers. Student manufactured outcome was a functioning Steady Hand Game.

Within Year 8, students continue to develop their communication skills with a particular focus on drawing. This year students also developed their skills in technical drawings, undertaking work on interpreting orthographic drawings, 3D objects using isometric projection and understanding dimensioning and standards.

Alongside the theory taught within the electronics aspect of the course, students also learnt about types of motion, cams, mechanical advantage, equilibrium as well as gear trains. This enabled them to start the next project, an autometer. Students worked on understanding the types of motion created using cams and translated this into sketched and card models of their designs. Students were then in the process of manufacturing their cam toy, recapping their understanding of workshop safety, tools and use of appropriate equipment.

Students would have been due to finish this project and then start another project, 'snack dispenser' looking at combining all the skills learnt, both graphically, technically and practically to design, manufacture and evaluate the final project in Year 8.

March – Present

Small projects have been set in conjunction with Seneca Learning to support students with some of the theory aspects of the course. Students worked on finishing some of their CAM toy modelling in cardboard and then undertook a

research presentation looking at a specific designer or company. More recently students have been working through a Covid-19 project, where they have been asked to research, design for, develop, model and test a prototype design for PPE.

We would like to thank you students and parents for your ongoing work within this difficult time and we have very much enjoyed seeing some of your work take shape.

English

Term 1: Crime

At the start of the year, Year 8 students read *Holes* by Louis Sachar, building on their reading analysis from Year 7. The skills which were tested in particular were character analysis, language and structure analysis, understanding of plot development and evaluation of how the writer is successful with his devices. The assessed piece for this half term was an analysis of how a character is presented in the novel, and the assessment focuses were appropriate use of evidence from the text to support analysis, an exploration of a range points, and the depth of the analysis.

The second half of the crime unit focused more on transactional writing, with police reports writing the focal piece of work. Students were taught the conventions of a report, including the style, structure and typical language uses, as well as being reminded of the importance of accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. The importance of planning was also highlighted in this unit, as it is impossible to construct a well-written piece of writing without careful planning having been applied first. The assessed piece was for the students to write a police report based on an incident described in a poem, with the assessment focus being appropriate use of language and register, accuracy of spelling, punctuation and grammar, and creativity and imagination.

Term 2: Culture

At this point in their learning path, students were introduced to a more complex GCSE skill, which was to compare and contrast texts. Accordingly, students explored a range of cultural poems and excerpts of prose, and were informed of the methods required to tackle the difficult GCSE compare/contrast questions. Classes read a range of well-written Bill Bryson travel texts and, for the assessment piece, students had to compare how Bryson engaged the reader in two of those texts. The assessment focuses were use of the prescribed comparison essay structure, discussions of how techniques impacted upon the audience, and the ability to effectively compare and contrast ideas themes and settings.

After the February half term, students began to focus on imaginative writing, by using image stimuli and exploring varied story openings and ambitious vocabulary. It was during this unit when school was closed.

Since shutdown

Students have been working on a new unit of work, designed especially for these unusual circumstances, called 'English through the Ages'. This unit includes information and tasks based on various periods in the history of the English Language, including the Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer, and how language has been used in literature and in plays over the years. In the final weeks of the year, students will continue this unit of work.

French

This year, in French, students have been given the opportunity to build upon the foundations of grammar and vocabulary covered in Year 7. Students were able to make use of newly acquired skills to attain level five, which indicates an ability to understand detailed spoken and written texts in the target language using two time frames. By December, students were also able to express opinions, use a wider range of structures and understand an extended range of details in texts. In particular, students showed evidence of reaching level six by writing paragraphs that are more complex and incorporating the future tense in their responses.

The topics covered by all include a description of a past holiday, festivals and celebrations, buying food at a market, discussing future travel, talking about celebrities and television programs, discussing digital technology and free time activities. Within these topics, students learned the grammatical rules surrounding conjugation of verbs in the present, past and future tense as well as word order rules and possessive adjectives. Since school closure, students have been able to advance their understanding and knowledge of French through exploring topics such as, the local area, weather, daily routine and sports. In addition, students have been offered the opportunity to understand some important cultural facts about the French-speaking sphere. For students continuing on to GCSE, there will be a transition module during the first half term to revisit the important rules of grammar covered and fully understand all the examination criteria.

Games

This year, building upon the breadth of winter activities covered in Year 7 and trying to ensure boys participate in lifelong physical activity, your son should have covered rugby, basketball, hockey, football and cross-country. Unfortunately, this year has been disrupted by the coronavirus outbreak, so not all students have had the chance to participate in each sport. Many students have represented the school during extra-curricular time participating against other schools in either friendlies or regional competitions. We are very

grateful for their hard work and commitment representing the school so admirably.

Geography

In Year 8 Geography, students have studied a range of key contemporary topics in understanding the world today. They have looked at the principles of understanding weather and climate including measuring and recording key variables as well as looking at the factors that affect climates around the world. students have developed the skills of drawing and analysing climate graphs and through a study of microclimates; students have developed basic enquiry skills, which can be developed at GCSE level.

students have studied Tropical Rainforest environments including their location, structure, vegetation characteristics and the lives of indigenous people. They have looked at threats to the rainforest environment through development and the environmental impacts at both local and global scales.

In Year 8 they have also studied the structure of the Earth, the development of the theory of Plate Tectonics and the key processes operating at plate margins. This has developed into a study of seismic and volcanic hazards and why the impacts of these natural hazards are very different in countries with differing levels of economic and social development.

students have undertaken a study of Antarctica which has included understanding the unique characteristics of this extreme environment, the threats posed to Antarctica and some of the issues regarding its management and governance.

German

This year in German, students have built upon the foundations of Grammar and Vocabulary learnt in Year 7. Nearly all students have been able to use their knowledge to attain a level five, which requires learners to produce and understand German, which refers to two time frames. Many students had begun to show evidence of level six, which requires the application and understanding of three time frames.

students have focussed their learning on a range of topic specific vocabulary and high frequency words in order to show their progression and understanding.

The topics covered include holidays, media, healthy lifestyles and school trips. Within these topics, students have been learning the grammatical rules relating to the imperfect and perfect tenses. The present tense of verbs, including a range of modal verbs to express what one can, should, may, must or want to do. The imperative mood to give instructions using the formal and informal register and the use of prepositions governing the accusative and dative case, with some dual case prepositions in addition to this.

Since school closure, students have been set a range of activities to help them to practise and improve. These include completion of workbook tasks for Chapter 4, Active Learn assignments, Memrise.com tasks and Duolingo activities.

For those students continuing on to GCSE, we will build upon this rudimentary knowledge of grammar and vocabulary as we begin to look at the five theme areas of the GCSE specification.

History

In History this year, students have studied a range of topics covering Britain's transformation into a modern global power during the Industrial Revolution through to the impact of two World Wars in the 20th century. Topics such as the slave trade, the struggle for democracy, the issue of Empire and its effects at home and abroad in the colonies and the causes of the First World War require students to grapple with challenging moral issues as well as historical debates. By the end of the summer term, our Year 8 students will also have the opportunity to pursue their own independent enquiry into an aspect of the Second World War, followed by a 20th century project which will enable them to take a more creative approach to presenting their own research.

In addition to a wide-ranging course content, Year 8 students have also had the opportunity to acquire and refine key skills of source analysis that will equip them for GCSE study should they choose to take this subject further. Each Year 8 CCT assessment uses GCSE question types, requiring students to pay close attention to the usefulness of historical sources and to compare and evaluate differing interpretations, for example, about the issue of child labour in the cotton mills, or the importance of the Suffragette movement in gaining votes for women. This approach helps students to make a smooth transition to GCSE, and to become more critical thinkers.

Mathematics

This year in maths, the students studied a variety of topics including Pythagoras, algebraic formulae, linear graphs, percentages, ratio, polygons and averages up to the point of lockdown. They sat 3 CCTs on these topics. Since lockdown, the maths department has continued to follow the scheme, using MyMaths and MathsWatch tutorials and assessment to cover topics including equations, inequalities, areas and circles. Thankfully, all the topics that we covered during lockdown are revisited in Year 9 and beyond. When we revisit these topics, we will be aware that the students may need a little extra time to consolidate them and we will include this in our planning. As a department we are confident that we can effectively help students move forward from this difficult time.

Music

Year 8's came prepared for revision sessions on their Year 7 theory work. They completed the first chapter of their Year 8 Theory book over the summer holiday. Students were given their first CCT within weeks of starting Year 8!

This meant that students were ready to start building on their Year 7 work with some slightly more complicated theoretical concepts. We looked at scales and tonic triads during the Autumn Term. The practical project was film music. We looked at how music can enhance a film. How different a film would be if we removed the music and how we could change the mood of a film by changing the music, rather than what the pictures were showing. Students went on to learn about 'Leitmotif' and how we can often recognise a film we are watching by listening to just a few bars of music. Students learnt how to play a number of leitmotif on the keyboard and then completed a CCT on the music of James Bond. In the Spring Term students completed the rest of the Year 8 theory book and they learnt about chords and intervals. Their theory work culminated in a CCT in February. We started to look at the history of the musical. We listened to various musicals, identified them, and looked at the difference between an opera and a musical. Since we finished school students have been using an online music platform called Focus in Sound. This has given Year 8 students the opportunity to look interactively at Jazz music. Students have also reinforced their learning of many of the new theoretical concepts we looked at in the Autumn Term and beginning of the Spring Term. More recently, I hope that Year 8 students have enjoyed the STOMP activities and learning different rhythmic patterns using equipment found in the house as part of the Olympic Project.

Physics

In Year 8 your son continued the work on energy started in Year 7, then moved on to something new. He looked into how forces alter objects by stretching and turning them, a huge part of daily life, before continuing the force theme and looking into what pressure is, and how it affects things. The next topic was light, whose behaviour impacts our lives constantly. It was early in the electricity topic when we suddenly went into remote learning. To ease into this he moved to the space topic producing a project about our Solar System. When this was finished he went back to the electricity topic to finish it off, and will conclude the year with some work on matter. When he starts GCSE in Year 9 he will at first be in a mixed ability set, which will be reviewed during the year.

RE

During Year 8 up until school closure, there has been a focus on human rights and then discrimination. students have completed a unit of work that examines the value of a human and whether it is possible to put a price on a human life. They have applied that understanding to historic and contemporary examples of slavery and how they abuse human rights. They have also looked at campaigners who protested against this.

students have completed a section on the Civil Rights movement in the 1950's and 1960's in the United States. They have looked at the life of Martin Luther King and how he used non violent protest to successfully change the law to grant more equality to black people. They have posed the question in light of

more contemporary incidents, has much changed? A conclusion was drawn that you can change the law, but it takes longer to change attitudes.

Depending on their class, some students have completed work on the life of Jesus, examining in particular the temptations and then the use of parables. Other students have completed a section on migration and why a Jewish person would leave Russia and attempt to journey to America, often settling in the UK instead. They then looked at what life was like as a Jewish immigrant often coming to this country with no money and no English.

From the end of March, students have been looking at a topic, care for creation, looking at the attitudes religious believers have towards the environment and whether they can use it appropriately. They have looked at environmental degradation before looking at the challenge between science and religion. They have then looked at prominent environmental campaigners like Dorothea Stang and Greta Thunberg.

Russian

This year, in Russian, all students have built on the foundations of grammar and vocabulary taught in Year 7. A significant focus of the year has been on developing an understanding of sentence structure and the use of tenses and time phrases. Most students have been able to use their knowledge to attain a level five, which requires learners to produce and understand Russian in two time frames. Some students had begun to show evidence of level six, which requires the application and understanding of three time frames.

Throughout the year, students have focused their learning on a range of topic specific vocabulary, including terms connected to school, holidays and the home, in addition to high frequency words and phrases. Within these topics students have been learning grammatical rules relating to the past, present and future tenses, the use of accusative, genitive, instrumental and prepositional cases, adjectival agreement in the nominative case, and the use of connectives to extend sentences.

Since school closure, students have continued to work through tasks connected to the topic of home, as well as undertaking a research project focused on exploring cultural aspects of a Russian city and using language in context.

For those students continuing to GCSE, we will begin Year 9 by revising and building on this knowledge of grammar and vocabulary as we revisit and develop previous knowledge through the lens of the five theme areas of the GCSE specification.

Spanish

In the second year of Spanish studies, Year 8 students have continued to develop their reading, listening, speaking and writing skills. In term one; the focus was describing a holiday. students learnt how to conjugate regular AR, ER and IR verbs, as well as some common irregular verbs in the preterit past tense.

They also have revised how to express opinions through the topics of technology, music and television and the importance of extending sentences using connectives and giving reasons. The focus in term two was food, eating out, and the conjugation of the near future tense. Students began to use all three tenses together. Since learning from home students have had the opportunity to complete a cultural project about Spain, as well as to learn how to describe their homes and use reflexive verbs. They have also used Memrise.com to learn new vocabulary and to consolidate prior learning. Work set has allowed students to practise their reading, listening and grammar skills at home and to receive feedback on their work. If students have chosen to continue to GCSE level, they will continue to extend their knowledge of tenses via the themes of identity and culture, local, national international and global areas of interest and current and future study and employment.