

Calday Grange Grammar School



Year 7

Subject Curriculum Statements

2019-20

Art

In Art lessons this academic year, students have focused on developing and exploring a range of core skills with a variety of media and techniques. Students have gained a wider knowledge of how to observe, appreciate and understand the world around them through the recording and sharing of their ideas. Additionally, students have been introduced to a number of artists and themes and learnt how to evaluate both their own work and that of others. At the beginning of the year learners were introduced to a range of tonal drawing exercises, mark making techniques and colour theory to gauge their understanding and initial ability. Furthermore, students have been taught how to present their work with regard to balance and composition. From this strong foundation of skills and techniques, students have gained an awareness of what constitutes a successful still life composition and the opportunity to draw from observation. A key emphasis in this unit of work was placed on recording proportions accurately and analysing shape and form closely. Some students were given the opportunity to produce more abstract pieces, developing a personal narrative in their work. Students then moved onto exploring more technical drawing skills to give their work a greater sense of depth. They learnt skills in drawing in both one and two-point perspective and applied this to various imagery. More recently, during closure, students have been studying a project based around the theme of 'Animals and Natural Forms'. Throughout this project, students have demonstrated an appreciation of pattern, shape and line to form their own Zen tangle designs. During Year 8, students can expect to study projects based around the themes of 'Monsters' and 'Urban Architecture'. As part of the Monsters unit, students will have the opportunity to work with sculptural materials and produce a subsequent animation; the Urban Architecture project will involve studying design and model making techniques and produce a three dimensional architectural model.

Biology

In Year 7, your son has covered several core topics within Biology. First, he studied and practised using a light microscope. He looked at the structures within animal and plant cells, how cells become specialised and how cells are organised in living organisms. He then learned about the reproductive systems in both humans and plants. The final topic he studied in school was how organisms release energy by respiration. Remote learning covered the respiratory system and the skeletal system. In Year 8, he will continue to be taught with his form group and the curriculum includes the digestive system, microorganisms, variation in living organisms and relationships between organisms in ecosystems. If conditions allow, he will have an opportunity to join us on an educational visit to Chester Zoo.

Chemistry

In Year 7, your son has covered several core chemistry topics. After an introduction unit focused upon key investigative skills he moved on to the unit physical and chemical changes. This enabled the development of key practical skills, providing the opportunity to work as part of a team and develop confidence with identifying patterns in order to form conclusions based upon the evidence. This was followed by two closely linked units: elements, mixtures & compounds followed by separation techniques. Students have completed the acids and alkalis unit during remote learning and are also working on the gases unit.

Chinese

Topics covered in 2020:

- Basic Chinese culture
- Pronunciation system-Pinyin and tones
- Basic radicals and character composition policy
- Greetings
- Numbers
- Family members
- Age
- Birthday
- pets
- Self-introduction

This academic year, all Year 7 students have had lessons in Chinese, a unique and challenging language. In these lessons, students have been taught how to build up a better understanding of the language and how to use Pinyin, a system based on Roman letters, to pronounce and develop their communication skills. Contextual themes including songs, poems, legends and festivals were introduced to give an insight into some elements of Chinese culture and to help develop a passion for future learning. Year 7 have been taught to use the Chinese language to introduce themselves and their family members. By the end of March, students had practiced skills in listening, reading, speaking and writing. Cultural research projects were organised as part of these tasks and all students have experienced writing Chinese characters. Year 7 students also enjoyed a musical Chinese Spring Festival Gala in February. They sang along with the band together; it was an excellent opportunity for them to understand languages beyond the usual European language experience.

Mandarin Excellence Programme (MEP)

Topics covered in 2020:

- Basic Chinese culture
- Pronunciation system-Pinyin and tones
- Basic radicals and character composition policy
- Greetings

- Numbers
- Family members
- Age
- Birthday
- pets
- Self-introduction
- Hobbies
- Sports

This academic year, a group of Year 7 students were selected to participate in the MEP intensive learning programme. The purpose of the programme is to produce highly motivated, highly skilled global citizens with a high level of fluency in Mandarin Chinese. Apart from curriculum lessons, they have attended after school and lunch time sessions. By March, the students had grasped the skills of writing Chinese characters and presenting beautiful handwriting. Besides this, their confidence in the other three core skills of, speaking, reading and listening had given them a solid foundation for their further learning. This is an intensive and accelerated programme, consisting of taught elements and online learning supported by enrichment days and events. The MEP students were not only exposed to Chinese language learning but also attended cultural sessions of intense learning in Liverpool, Chinese 'Bubble Tea' tasting, Chinese Dragon dance and drum sessions and a Chinese writing and speaking competition. Chinese online resources were introduced to engage their interests. The Chinese subject staff wish to congratulate the student's for their hard work and success in the MEP and hope that they continue to work as hard next academic year.

Computer Studies

All Year 7 students have studied computer science for 2 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.

In the beginning of Year 7 the students were introduced to a history of computer science through a topic also introduced fundamental terms such as pattern recognition and decomposition which they will continue to use throughout key stage 3 and beyond. The second unit was E-Safety which showed students how to stay safe online and why it is important to act responsibly online. We believe as a department that the students did very well with this unit and understood clearly what was being put across. It also allowed the students to be creative and they used a new piece of software to create their own videos teaching others how to stay safe online. The third unit and the topic that students were completing before lockdown was the data modelling unit that has shown students what data is, how data is used and manipulated in spreadsheets and other documents, this unit also marked the reintroduction of digital literacy into our computer science curriculum.

After the school closure and lockdown was put into place, we used an online tool called CodeCombat which taught some of the basics of the python programming language in a gamified way and is a fantastic tool to engage our young programmers. We found that most of the Year 7 students had little to no programming experience (which is perfectly fine) and therefore CodeCombat was there to assist them in their journey to becoming great programmers. Throughout this programming journey, all the respective teachers of the students were available via email to guide those that were struggling. 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.

As of 18 May we moved on to Code-Breaking. This topic incorporates the foundations and key areas of Computer Science such as algorithms, abstraction, decomposition and pattern recognition - our aim is that the students will know what each of these terms means and how they are used. Thus far in the topic students have learnt about ciphers, why they are used and the algorithms behind well-known ciphers.

On 8 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 to return to our Code-Breaking topic, starting with types of communication like braille and Morse-code. Then, before we come to the end of the topic we will consider the work of Alan Turing - whom many regards as the father of computer science - our Year 7 students will finish the year by helping Alan to crack a code and discover the position of the German U-boats (although we don't expect them to break the enigma code by then).

Drama

The students have been introduced to the theatrical skills of storytelling, structured improvisation, physical comedy, textual analysis and characterisation.

The first project they explored was focused around the tales of the Brothers Grimm in which students were tasked with using narration, physical and vocal acting skills, devising and storytelling skills to dramatise some of these famous tales. Students were tasked with taking the story in it's written form and identifying key moments to explore practically, gradually piecing together a cohesive and complete theatrical retelling of the story. They were assessed on

their ability to collaborate with their peers as well as their individual performance skills.

Following this they studied the adapted play script of the Rudyard Kipling novel, The Jungle Book. Key scenes were explored through rehearsal in groups looking at the physical and vocal challenges of playing animals as well as close focus on analysing a text to develop characterisation and interaction with other characters. Students choose their own scene to explore in more detail for their assessment in which they were tasked with learning their lines, collaborating within a group as well as creating a controlled, believable and engaging character in performance.

Prior to the lock down we had begun to look at the genre of physical comedy and clowning. Students were introduced to the basic principles of comedy and the importance of controlled yet exaggerated physicality to create a piece of comedic physical theatre. The principles of Mr. Bean and other esteemed physical clowns were explored and the students were expressing these skills through structured improvisation.

As well as introducing the students to a range of different theatrical styles, a key component of Year 7 drama is to engage the students within personal development. Key life skills such as self esteem, self confidence and expression, the ability to collaborate within mixed groups as well as feeling secure in speaking publicly are intrinsically explored through the syllabus.

DT

September – March

Your son has covered several projects since the start of Year 7 and up until the school closure due to the pandemic. Students started with an initial assessment, as many students have not studied the subject in primary school. Following this, students were taught the importance of workshop safety, including that of key and tools and equipment, along with some specialist machinery. This was part of the 'gripper' project, where students manufactured a litter picker looking at product analysis, ergonomics and anthropometrics, levers and linkages, as well as having the opportunity to practically develop their skills via a manufactured product.

As well as developing students' ability to work practically, it is a key requirement of the course, that students are also able to communicate effectively. Students undertook a drawing project which focused on sketched communication of ideas, looking specifically a perspective drawing, shading, rendering and tone, as well as drawing in 3D using the isometric technique. Depending on when in the timetable students were taught, this project is run in conjunction with a national competition, therefore some students may have started this first. The 'rocket car challenge' looks at the Bloodhound World Record attempt car and looks to recreate this in the classroom. Students work

within teams to manufacture a foam car using modelling techniques, design and manufacture the wheels using CAD and a laser cutter. Students were due to compete across Year 7 in April to gauge the fastest car using Micro Bits, this unfortunately had to be cancelled due to the pandemic and school closure.

Students would have been due to start another project, 'block bots' looking at combining all the skills learnt, both graphically, technically and practically to design, manufacture and evaluate a mini wooden robot toy.

March – Present

Students started by continuing to develop their communication skills working through a Sketching project. Small projects have been set in conjunction with Seneca Learning to support students with some of the theory aspects of the course. Students then worked on 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: Survival

Students worked on descriptive writing at the start of the year, with a focus on increasing the quality of their creative skills. The students had to focus on spelling, punctuation and grammar, as well as how to structure their writing in a professional, efficient and effective way. There was also attention paid to the different figurative language techniques, what impact they have and how they can be used effectively. The resultant assessment was for students to describe their first day at school, which could be real or imagined, and the assessment focuses were accuracy of spelling and punctuation, use of varied vocabulary and employment of figurative techniques.

The second half term of the Survival unit focused on reading techniques and analysis. The chosen text was Wonder by R. J. Palacio. A large number of skills were assessed in this section, including reading, understanding, analysis of structure and language techniques used by the writer – and all of these require close and careful selections of quotations from the text. Students also learned about word classes and have begun to expand their repertoire of technical analytical vocabulary. The assessed piece was a written analysis of an extract from the novel, and the assessment focuses were range of analytical ideas selected, choice and use of evidence and analysis of individual words in the extract.

Term 2: Monsters

After Christmas, lots of the skills acquired in half term 2 were carried forward and developed, as students read sections of Stephen King's novel, *It*. This topic was designed to allow students to use everything they were taught before the break with Wonder, but apply it to a more challenging text. In addition, students were introduced to the skill of evaluation, where they must make an informed judgement about whether or not the writer is successful in achieving an effect. The resultant assessment was to analyse and evaluate the monster in the novel and how it is presented, and the assessment focuses were evaluating the writer's success, analysis of language and structural techniques in the text and use of key analytical terminology, including identification of word classes.

After the February half term, students were introduced to the topic of transactional writing, with specific focus on writing speeches. There was a particular focus on how texts can be written in different genres (e.g. speech, newspaper, etc.), to suit different audiences (e.g. children or teachers) and for different purposes (e.g. to persuade, advise or entertain). It was during this unit when school was closed.

Since shutdown

Students were asked to continue with their speech writing, and were also introduced to different genres of text, such as public information warning posters, storyboard writing for entertainment, informative newspaper articles, and review writing.

In the final weeks of the school year, students will be looking at various war poems, using the skills acquired earlier in the year to analyse the poems in detail.

French

This year in French, students have been given the opportunity to learn foundation grammar rules and vocabulary. Students were able to make use of newly acquired skills to attain level three, which indicates an ability to understand short spoken and written texts in the target language and to express simple ideas orally. 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 four by writing paragraphs that are more complex and being able to use coordinating conjunctions to structure ideas.

The topics covered by all include personal details, descriptions of brother and sisters, pets, school, free time and hobbies. Within these topics, students learned the grammatical rules surrounding conjugation of verbs in the present tense, word order rules and possessive adjectives. Since school closure, students have been able to advance their understanding and knowledge of French through exploring the topics of wider family description and breakfast

as well as being offered the chance to understand some important cultural facts about the French-speaking sphere. In Year 8, students will reinforce many of these concepts with further practice in the context of new topics and will begin to learn how to refer to past and future events.

Games

With the focus for Year 7 Games being on breadth of experience, the students have had the opportunity to develop their skills in rugby, hockey, football, swimming and overt PE. 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 7 Geography, students have studied a range of physical and human geography topics to provide a grounding for the study of the subject at GCSE level in later years. Students initially studied the United Kingdom and the Wirral to develop basic map skills and to enhance their knowledge of key locational features in the UK. They were able to look at links and connections within the UK and Wirral.

The course has covered a basic introduction to Geology including rock types, the rock cycle and how geology influences the character of our local area. We have studied settlements, including how these are classified, identifying site factors and understanding how settlements change over time.

Students have become proficient in a range of map reading skills (direction, use of scale, 6 figure grid references, using map symbols and showing height on a map). They have also learned how to use an atlas and the principles of latitude and longitude to locate places at a global scale.

Students have expanded their knowledge of some key contemporary issues such as the threats to our ocean and coral reef environments through pollution and plastic dispersal. Some students have studied river environments and the processes at work to create distinctive landscapes as well as looking at issues related to flooding.

German

This year in German, students have been learning the basics of grammar, vocabulary and sentence structure. Nearly all students were able to use their knowledge to attain level 3, which requires learners to give and understand opinions in German. Many students had begun to show evidence of level 4, which requires learners to write, say and understand a more extended piece of German, equivalent to a short paragraph containing sentences linked by coordinating conjunctions, such as and / but.

students have focussed their learning on a range of topic specific vocabulary and high frequency words in order to be able to show their progression and understanding. The topics covered by all include:

- Personal details: Introductions and personal information, including their names, ages, where they live and how they are.
- Pets and family: Working on descriptions.
- Sports, technology and opinions: Concentrating on saying what they think about things and using the two different words for "because".
- Some students have begun to explore the topic of school.

Within these topics, students have been learning the grammatical rules surrounding verbs in the present tense, word order rules, possessive adjectives, declension of definite and indefinite articles and adjectives in the nominative and accusative cases, adverbs and basic dual verb constructions using the modal verb "can".

Since school closure, students have continued to work through subject content, including describing their school, including subjects, routines, teachers and opinions and describing their town, including shopping, food and holiday plans. They have used worksheets, listening's, videos and Memrise to become familiar with the subject content.

In Year 8, students will reinforce many of these concepts with further practice in the context of new topics and will begin to learn how to refer to past and future events.

History

In History this year, students have studied a range of topics covering key social and political developments from the Middle Ages through to the Early Modern period. Medieval topics included the upheaval brought by the Norman Conquest and the Black Death, aspects of medieval life and the power of medieval monarchs and the challenges they faced at various times from barons, peasants and the Church. More recently, students have been able to pursue a line of independent inquiry through more open-ended tasks, such as the production of a 'Tudor Magazine' to investigate key figures, issues and lifestyles of the 16th century, and provide a comparison with medieval society. Before the end of the summer term, similar approaches will allow students to explore the causes and impact of the English Civil War through to the end of the 17th century.

Throughout the Year 7 course, our students have been introduced to core historical skills and concepts, and these have formed the basis of our CCT assessments. For example, precise chronology and sequencing helps students to identify causes and consequences, such as the reasons for William of Normandy's victory at the Battle of Hastings in 1066. Subsequent CCTs help to develop more sophisticated skills of analysing and evaluating source evidence

to support judgements about the past, for example, when assessing the reign of King John, or the reasons why people went on Crusade in 1095. students have had the opportunity, through a range of learning styles, to build up their confidence in the classroom through collaborative group work, discussions, debates and the presentation of their own work to their peers for review.

Mathematics

This year in maths, the students studied a variety of topics including rounding, algebraic expressions, fractions, ratio and sequences 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 probability, transformations and averages. Thankfully, all the topics that we covered during lockdown are revisited in Year 8 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

We started the year with a baseline test, this gave us an idea of how much music your son had done at primary school or as an extracurricular activity. We also use the test to highlight students that have a natural aptitude for the subject. The first topic that we looked at was rhythmic patterns and note values. Students completed a CCT and musical games as well as written work in this unit. During the second half of the autumn term we started a module on singing and all Year 7 students were given the opportunity to take part in the Christmas Concert. Whilst doing a module on singing students also looked at the notes of the treble and bass clef and how notes are arranged on the musical stave. Students continued to reinforce their note learning after Christmas, whilst we started learning about instruments of the orchestra. Students learnt about each of the four families and studied the Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra. They completed three CCT's this term: One testing how well they knew their notes on the musical stave, another was a written test on instruments of the orchestra and the final CCT was listening; students had to identify instruments by ear. After half term we started to look at Minimalism. The introduction to this unit was through African Music. Students learnt about many of the technical terms of minimalism through playing the Djembe Drum. Since we finished school in March students have been using an online platform called Focus on Sound. Through this, students have continued their theoretical learning of music and looked at different instruments and techniques of African music, interactively. They have completed work on 'Classical' music with a particular focus on minimalism. Students have also reinforced their theoretical learning of the musical notes through this interactive learning platform. Hopefully, students have enjoyed doing some of the musical STOMP tasks set out in the school Olympic Project.

Physics

In Year 7, your son has covered several core Physics topics. After an introductory topic showing why investigation is important he moved on to Forces. This allowed him to understand better how things interact with each other, even when stationary. This led into some work on energy, and how when something happens energy is moved from one store to another. He also did some work with waves and sound before we transferred to remote learning part way through the magnetic fields topic. During remote learning he completed this topic and the final Year 7 topic of motion. Next year he will build on these topics and add new ones to get a good foundation for starting GCSE.

RE

During Year 7, RE has covered two major topics in the Autumn term, Holy Books and Festivals of Light, and we got through most of a major topic on the origins of Judaism before the school was closed before completing a major topic on Care for Creation by remote learning.

From the start of the year students looked at the idea of story as a way of communicating the history of a society and then went on to examine the idea of what makes a book sacred and why people should treat it with respect. They then examined how Christians used their holy book. Later in the term, students looked at the concept of light and its symbolism before exploring the story behind two festivals of light, Diwali and Hanukkah. They then examined how Diwali and Hanukkah are celebrated especially in the home by their respective communities.

In the Spring term, students explored the stories of the Patriarchs of Judaism, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob before examining the life of Joseph. They were able to learn the stories that made these people famous and to discuss some of the issues that arose, for example, what comes first, faith or family? We started on the topic of Moses and the Exodus prior to the closure of school.

From the end of March, students have been looking at a topic, Care for Creation and at the attitudes religious believers have towards the environment including whether they 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, during the first three months the key focus was to develop basic speaking skills as well as fundamental reading skills by learning a new script: Cyrillic. We learnt the basics of grammar, vocabulary and sentence structure. Nearly all students were able to use their knowledge to attain level three, which requires learners to give, and understand basic information on a variety of topics. Many students had begun to show evidence of level four in Russian, which requires learners to write, say and understand a more extended piece of Russian. This is equivalent to a short paragraph containing sentences

linked by coordinating conjunctions, such as and / but and express some opinions.

students have focussed their learning on a range of topic specific vocabulary and high frequency words in order to be able to show their progression and understanding. The topics covered by all include personal details, family, pets and town. Within these topics, students have been learning the grammatical rules surrounding verbs in the present tense, possessive adjectives, and adjectives in the nominative case and adverbs. Since school closure students have been encouraged to complete a variety of worksheets and work on their vocabulary using Quizlet/Memrise activities as well as completing a Research project based on exploring Russian culture, history and traditions. In Year 8, students will reinforce many of these concepts with further practice in the context of new topics and will begin to learn how to refer to past and future events.

Spanish

In the first year of their Spanish studies, all Year 7 students have developed their reading, listening, speaking and writing skills. In term one; students have learnt how to describe themselves and their families. They studied singular and plural nouns and the rules of adjectival agreement. They also learnt how to express opinions in regards to free time and the importance of extending sentences using connectives and giving reasons. There has been a particular emphasis on authentic pronunciation. The focus in term two was school and where you live and the conjugation of regular AR, ER and IR verbs, as well as common irregular verbs in the present tense. Since learning from home students have had the opportunity to complete a cultural project in Spain, as well as to learn how to describe a town. They have also used Memrise.com to learn new vocabulary and to consolidate prior learning. Active learn, an online language-learning package, has allowed students to practise their reading, listening and grammar skills at home and to receive immediate feedback on their work. In Year 8, students will learn how to use the past and future tenses which will allow them to reach at least a level six.