



La Retraite

Roman Catholic Girls' School

Key Stage 3 Curriculum



A Guide for
Parents and Students



Faith



Values



Excellence





Introduction

The contents of this booklet should give you an idea of the current curriculum your daughter will follow at La Retraite. The aim of the Key Stage 3 Curriculum is to prepare the students for GCSE, and allow them to start studying the GCSE when they are ready.

In this booklet, for each subject, there is:

- » An overview of the content taught;
- » The grade descriptors for each level.

The grade descriptors - a description of what your daughter has to achieve to reach a certain GCSE level - will also be explained to students during lessons.



Computing

In **Key Stage 3 Computing**, students learn:

- » To design, use, and evaluate computational abstractions using two or more programming languages (at least one of which being textual) to solve a variety of computational problems;
- » To make appropriate use of data structures (for example, lists, tables, or arrays); design and develop data structures that use procedures or functions;
- » To understand simple boolean logic (for example, AND, OR, and NOT) and some of its uses;
- » To understand the hardware and software components that make up computer systems, and how they communicate with one another, and with other systems;
- » To understand how instructions are stored and executed within a computer system;
- » To undertake creative projects that involve selecting, using, and combining multiple applications, preferably across a range of devices, to achieve challenging goals including collecting and analysing data, and meeting the needs of known users;
- » To create, re-use, revise, and re-purpose digital artefacts, and understand a range of ways to use technology safely, respectfully, responsibly, and securely, including protecting their online identity and privacy.

Examples of Topics Delivered:

Year Group	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Year 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logical operators • Effective internet searching • eSafety • Interactive programming • Code.org programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardware & software components of a computer • Input & output devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreadsheet Modelling
Year 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flow charts • Database design and implementation including theory and data capture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scratch integrated project • Integrated project using system analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICT and society • Viral integrated project
Year 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced database design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intermediate programming with Python • Computer theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced computer theory with mathematical calculations • Integrated project



Creative Arts

The **Creative Arts Department** at La Retraite is a vibrant, exciting, and creative place for students to learn and understand the different elements of Art and Design, and how and why products and recipes are manufactured.

Through problem solving, creative thinking, design, and manufacture, students are able to create pieces of art, recipes, and products that meet the needs of specific clients or target groups, and are given wide-ranging opportunities to use new technologies and techniques to resolve design problems.

Creative Arts at Key Stage 3 works on a rotational basis and includes four areas; Art, Food, Resistant Materials, and Textiles, each with their own designated, well-equipped workroom. In all areas, students are encouraged to become independent and creative workers, problem-solvers who can develop individual skills and contribute to team tasks.

- » **Art** – Understanding and applying the different elements of Art and Design, and working with different media to create 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional pieces of art;
- » **Food** – Understanding the impact of ingredients and food types on healthy diets and lifestyles, developing healthy and safe cooking skills and techniques, developing presentation skills;
- » **Resistant Materials** – Understanding and working with various materials, developing machine and hand-tool skills, effectively communicating visual ideas and understanding simple electronic systems;
- » **Textiles** – Research and development of ideas through artistic influences, looking at culture and how this influences design, developing new skills and textile techniques both hand- and machine-focussed.

There are also cross-curricular links with other subject areas such as Maths, Science, English, Geography, and History, and students are encouraged to utilise and enhance these skills within the Creative Arts.

Students are also encouraged to think about the cultural, environmental, and moral aspects of their Art, Design, and manufacturing, with evaluation and modification of their design proposals playing a large part in the manufacturing of their final piece or product.

The aim of the Creative Arts department is to ensure that every student enjoys learning, develops new skills, is able to make progress, and achieves to their full potential.

Creative Arts grades are evaluated in 6 categories: Generating Ideas, Planning, Applying Knowledge and Understanding, Modelling, Working with Materials, and Evaluating. The grade descriptors for these categories can be found on the following pages.



Drama

During **Key Stage 3 Drama**, students study a different themed topic each half term, covering the skills of Preparation, Performance, and Evaluation.

Preparation:

Developing co-operation, teamwork, leadership, and communication skills. Listening and responding to others in a range of activities and developing empathy. Developing creativity and imagination.

Performance:

Developing the use of voice, movement, space, gesture, and facial expressions. Exploring different theatrical styles through improvisation and scripted work. Exploring a range of theatrical techniques.

Evaluation:

Developing critical and analytical awareness through verbal reflections on the performances of others. Composing written evaluations.

Year 7 Drama Topics

Autumn 1	Darkwood Manor
Autumn 2	Storytelling Theatre
Spring 1	Mime, Movement, and Sound
Spring 2	History of Theatre: Greek
Summer 1	Improvisational Skills
Summer 2	Prepared Improvisation

Year 8 Drama Topics

Autumn 1	Detectives
Autumn 2	Victorians
Spring 1	Mime, Movement, and Sound
Spring 2	History of Theatre: Melodrama
Summer 1	Signs and Meanings
Summer 2	Prepared Improvisation

Year 9 Drama Topics

Autumn 1	Diary Improvisation
Autumn 2	Spies
Spring 1	Mime, Movement, and Sound
Spring 2	History of Theatre: Shakespeare
Summer 1	Dramatic Tension and Suspense
Summer 2	Prepared Improvisation



English

During Key Stage 3, students will develop the skills needed for the new **GCSE English Language and Literature** examination they will take at the end of Year 11. Each year group will be taught to write accurately in a variety of forms and for different purposes and audiences, study an author in depth, and explore the three genres of poetry, prose, and drama from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.

Year 7	
Autumn Term	Gothic novels, Daphne Du Maurier's 'Jamaica Inn', students' ability to write using Gothic features, analysis of writers' linguistic and structural choices in a formal essay
Spring Term	Roald Dahl's autobiography 'Boy', students' own exaggerated autobiographies, Shakespeare's 'Much Ado About Nothing' and its Elizabethan context, techniques Shakespeare uses to create characters
Summer Term	Victorian Melodrama, extracts from 'Sherlock Holmes', 'Sweeney Todd', and Maria Marten, students' own melodrama using typical features from Melodrama, a range of ballads including 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' and 'The Listeners', linguistic features, structural choices, and narratives typical of Melodrama
Year 8	
Autumn Term	World literature, either Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's 'Purple Hibiscus' or John Steinbeck's 'Of Mice and Men', Detective Genre, 'The Speckled Band', 'A Murder is Announced'
Spring Term	Two short plays by Willy Russell; 'The Boy with the Transistor Radio' and 'Our Day Out', the art of rhetoric, speech-making skills, and preparing students for a formal debate
Summer Term	Poetry from other cultures including Maya Angelou and John Agard, students' own 'Lonely Planets Guides' on a country of their choice, examples of literary travel writing from authors such as Bill Bryson and DH Lawrence
Year 9	
Autumn Term	Charles Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol', students' ability to analyse unseen extracts from the novel, non-fiction including some literary non-fiction
Spring Term	Conflict in Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet', Shakespeare's sonnets, short stories, preparation for students' own short stories
Summer Term	Poetry from the new GCSE anthology in preparation for AQA GCSE English Literature, induction into GCSE English Language



Geography

Key Stage 3 Geography is concerned with the study of places, the human, and physical processes which shape them and the people who live in them. It helps students to make sense of their surroundings and the wider world.

La Retraite students study a wide variety of topics which aim to make them responsible global citizens.

Year 7 Geography Topics

Autumn 1	What is Geography?
Autumn 2	The UK: Our Island Home
Spring 1	Map Skills
Spring 2	Weather and Climate - includes local fieldwork
Summer 1	Ecosystems
Summer 2	Tourism

Year 8 Geography Topics

Autumn 1	Rivers: Processes and Features
Autumn 2	Rivers: Flooding and Management - includes local fieldwork
Spring 1	Population and Migration
Spring 2	Urbanisation
Summer 1	Hazards - Tectonic and Weather
Summer 2	Climate Change

In Year 9, students will begin preparing for the AQA Geography GCSE qualification.



History

In Key Stage 3 History, students will study local, British, and world history. This will include learning about significant events, people, and changes from the recent and more distant past. In the new curriculum, lessons focus more on themes and relevance of historical events.

Students show their understanding of what they have learned by making connections and drawing contrasts between different periods and areas studies by using their historical knowledge to analyse the past and explain how it can be represented and interpreted in different ways. Students will also learn how different types of historical sources are used to make claims about the past.

Year 7 History Topics

Autumn Term	What is History? Introduction and Skills The role of William the Conqueror and the Battle of Hastings Themes of the control and power of the Medieval monarchs
Spring Term	Contrasts and connections: comparing life during the Middle Ages in Britain and the Islamic World. Turning points such as the Black Death and the Peasants' Revolt
Summer Term	Renaissance men, including Henry VIII, Martin Luther, Edward VI Moving on to Tudor Queens and Divine Kings

Year 8 History Topics

Autumn Term	Industrial Revolution Agriculture, factories, towns, and public health Moving on to British and Spanish Empires
Spring Term	Conflicts of the 20 th Century
Summer Term	Civil rights in the USA Leading figures such as Martin Luther King and Malcolm X A local history project

There will also be half-termly homework which will enhance and stretch the topic studied in the classroom.



Mathematics

Since September 2014, the emphasis of the teaching of **Key Stage 3 Mathematics** is to for students to become fluent in the fundamentals of the subject, developing their reasoning skills, and becoming better at problem solving.

There has been minimal change to the content to be taught, but there is an expectation that students will build on their knowledge from Key Stage 2, and have a solid foundation for their GCSE studies in later years.

In line with the new emphasis, we have purchased new textbooks and homework books that have been designed to maximise student opportunities to engage in problem solving and reasoning. These books are closely linked with the MyMaths website that we already subscribe to, and which has proven very popular with our students. The books will be used in conjunction with other resources developed or purchased by the Mathematics department.

The homework books are textbooks that the students will be issued at the start of the year to use at home. The textbooks will be available for use in classrooms at school; there will be online access for all students through a VLE platform accessed via password.

Students will continue to be taught in one of six 'sets' based on ability, throughout Key Stage 3 and GCSE level.

To continue the success achieved over many years by our students at GCSE level, all students will begin following GCSE Mathematics in the Autumn Term of Year 9. We are very confident that the new schemes of work we are introducing at both KS3 and GCSE level, and the material that the students will be given access to, will ensure that they enjoy learning Mathematics throughout their time at La Retraite, and that they achieve their full potential in this important subject.



At Key Stage 3, we offer students the opportunity to study **French** or **Spanish**. In Year 7, students are taught in mixed-ability groups, whilst students in Years 8 and 9 are taught in 'sets'. Many students choose to then continue to study a language at GCSE. Assessment of the four key skills - listening, reading, writing, and speaking - takes place on a half-termly basis.

What Will Students Study?

During Key Stage 3, students can expect to study a range of topics and grammar that will enable them to begin to communicate effectively in the target language.

Topics studied at Key Stage 3 include:

- » How to introduce and describe yourself and others'
- » Describing where you live;
- » Talking about sports and hobbies;
- » How to make arrangements to go out;
- » Ordering and buying food;
- » Describing and planning holidays;
- » Describing illnesses;
- » Talking about healthy eating.

In particular, students will be encouraged to develop their ability in using a range of tenses and to be able to give their opinion on a variety of topics.



Music

For Key Stage 3 Music, Students will receive a 50-minute class lesson once a week in order to:

- » Develop a love and appreciation of music and music making;
- » Learn and develop the necessary knowledge and skills required to prepare them for continued study of music at Key Stage 4, should they opt to do so.

Curriculum Content Overview:

Learning objectives in lessons focus on one or more of the following skills:

- » Performing;
- » Explaining;
- » Defining;
- » Listing;
- » Demonstrating;
- » Describing;
- » Recognising;
- » Identifying;
- » Memorising;
- » Writing;
- » Improvising;
- » Arranging;
- » Composing;
- » Creating;
- » Evaluating.

Specific Musical Skills:

Include:

- » Practical skills - understanding how to play or sing a piece of music with the correct technique (voice, keyboard, guitar, computer sequencer, percussion).
- » Aural skills - understanding how to identify features of music they can hear and improve their ability to memorise musical sound.
- » Theoretical skills - understanding how to read, notate, and describe music.
- » Analytical skills - understanding and investigating how and why a composer has created a piece of music.
- » Composition skills - understanding how to create their own music and arrange that of other people.

Musical Knowledge:

Focuses on the following areas:

- » Performance technique;
- » Musical elements: timing and duration; pitch; expression; texture; structure; harmony; instrumentation and timbre;
- » Genres, traditions, and styles.



Physical Education

The **Key Stage 3 Physical Education** curriculum inspires students to participate and develop in a healthy, active lifestyle, and to develop communication and leadership skills through coaching and Leadership Award schemes within the department. The PE curriculum encourages students to analyse their performance and to identify ways to improve their personal best.

The students will also have the opportunity to obtain a Student Leadership Award. The PE department works closely with local primary schools. Our Sports Leaders coach and officiate within the borough in many sports, including the Multi-Skills Borough Competition for Key Stage 1 and 2, Lambeth High 5 Netball Leagues, and the Lambeth Primary Key Stage 2 Borough Competition.

	<i>Autumn Term</i>	<i>Spring Term</i>	<i>Summer Term</i>
Year 7	Students will complete a Multi-Skills transition unit that will enable teachers to assess each students' ability in a wide range of different skills and sports.	Students will explore, perform, analyse, and develop their skills in 'Outwitting Opponents' games, Fitness, Sports Hall Athletics, Team Building, Dance, and Gymnastic-related units.	Students will explore, perform, analyse, and develop their skills in Athletics, Rounders, and Tennis.
Year 8	Students will explore, perform, analyse, and develop in health-related fitness and skills. This will enable teachers to transfer their fundamental skills to different sports and workshops.		
Year 9	Students will explore, perform, analyse, and develop in health-related fitness and skills. This will enable teachers to transfer their fundamental skills to different sports and workshops.		



Religious Education

At the heart of **Key Stage 3 Religious Education** is the person of Jesus Christ. At La Retraite Roman Catholic Girls' School, we profess Christ as our Lord and Saviour of the world with confidence and clarity. We do this in a spirit of openness and dialogue; we also deeply respect the rights of all members of the school community to hold their own beliefs.

We encourage all to engage as fully as possible with every aspect of school life, in the Religious Education curriculum as well as the worship and liturgy of the School. Within the School's curriculum, classroom Religious Education's main purpose is to engage pupils in a systematic study of the mystery of Christ which we believe holds the fullness of the truth that God has revealed. We do this providing the understanding of the Catholic Faith in a manner that embraces ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue with other world religions and non-religious views. The students are invited, in a spirit of great respect, to be openly critical and reflective when engaging with the material.

We use a variety of teaching methods, from modern role plays, to games and music, as well as the more traditional methods such as reading, essay writing, presentations, and intellectual debates and discussions.

What We Study Each Academic Year

Year 7	Holy Scripture and other religious texts, the role of Mary within the Christmas narrative, the birth of the early Church community, the role of the disciples, insight into the Church's history, role and structure, drawing parallels of unity and schisms in other faith traditions, Sacraments of initiation and healing within Buddhism
Year 8	Catholic teaching on creation, creationist views, evolutionary theory, and Judaic, Hindu, or Islamic understandings, the Jewish faith through Abraham, Isaac, Moses, importance of the Covenants, the Torah, the Ark of the Covenant, Jewish understandings of worship in a pre-Christian era, roles of Old Testament prophets such as Elijah, Amos, Moses, and the parallels with modern day prophets, the New Covenant in Jesus through His Passion and Resurrection, a unit of the Holy Mass and Modern Judaism
Year 9	The teachings of Jesus and the miracles from a Biblical stance and a scientific view, and how other faith traditions view these events, exploration of Sikhism compared and contrasted against other faith traditions, fundamental philosophy on the nature of Conscience, moral and ethical approaches to moral questions, commencing GCSE RE by looking at Islam



Science

Starting from Year 7, in **Key Stage 3 Science**, students will be taught the skills that are needed for scientists by undertaking scientific investigations. All areas will have a test, an opportunity for a project, and investigation skills.

Areas Covered in Year 7

Physics	Space, Forces, Light, Sound
Chemistry	Particles & Elements, Mixtures & Compounds, Reactions with Acids
Biology	Cells, Body Systems, Reproduction, Inheritance

Areas Covered in Year 8

Physics	Light, Sound, Motion, Pressure, Electricity, Magnetism
Chemistry	Metals, Reactions with Acids, the Rock Cycle
Biology	Health, Lifestyle Choices, Adaptations, Inheritance

In Year 9, students will follow the GCSE curriculum and do parts of AQA Chemistry 1, Biology 1, and Physics 1.