

JAMES ALLEN'S GIRLS' SCHOOL

Year 8 Curriculum Outline

(N.B. All periods are 35 minutes long, although some subjects are taught in double periods.)

Art

A double period weekly; girls are taught in half-class groups.

The first three years are very important; they are arranged as a programme of integrated learning that will equip pupils for the GCSE course. All work in the department starts with observation. The department believes that drawing is the foundation of all Art, drawing to observe, invent, express, explore and investigate. Pupils are taught to research, develop and evaluate ideas; most projects result in a final piece. All pupils are introduced to a wide range of art, artists and cultures. The full syllabus for Years 7, 8 and 9 can be viewed on the department's Web page, within the school's website. In Year 8 pupils are taught how to use, investigate and experiment with various media and techniques available to artists, both fine and applied. Time is spent seriously experimenting and exploring the possibilities of each medium and this is related to a specific aesthetic element and aim. Materials could include: charcoal, paint collage, pastel and printmaking, ICT and textile media.

Drama

A double period weekly

In Years 7, 8 and 9 our aims are to enable pupils to: develop key skills in creativity, self-confidence, concentration and communication; interpret text and themes and give them dramatic form; explore theatre styles of different periods and cultures; identify issues and principles, make decisions and explore them throughout the process; work in groups of different sizes; take responsibility for development, building on one another's contributions; write and design; evaluate work in progress and finished pieces with sensitivity and understanding.

In Year 8 the use of skills becomes more sophisticated, selecting material and negotiating with a group, adopting and sustaining roles, presenting to an audience. The emphasis is on understanding particular performance styles from different periods and genres: melodrama, silent movie, Commedia and may include Greek and Japanese mask work. Masks or puppets are made and played.

English

Four periods each week

Units of work which will be undertaken at some point in the year include: the study of a Shakespeare play; sonnets and iambic pentameter; a 19th Century novel and at least one other. There will be a focus on the social, cultural and historical context of the reading done and novels could be chosen from the works of Charlotte Bronte, Dickens, Wilkie Collins, Orwell and Steinbeck. Oral activities are undertaken throughout the year and preparation for the school debating competition is started in the Autumn Term.

French

Three periods weekly; girls are taught in six groups, rather than whole classes.

The four skills – Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing – are given equal emphasis. The textbook used is *Encore Tricolore 2 Nouvelle edition* (+ additional materials). The course is arranged as follows:

Autumn Term - *Topics:* shopping, countries + prepositions, transport, detailed descriptions of town and area and facilities, projects in the near future, transport, opinions on school life. *Grammar:* irregular –er verbs, -re and –ir verbs, vouloir and pouvoir and infinitive, aller + infinitive, voir, venir, dire, lire, écrire

Spring Term - *Topics:* staying with a French family, visiting restaurants, describing meals, travel and excursions in the past. *Grammar:* Passé Composé with avoir and être, time phrases, demonstrative adjectives, use of negatives with Passé Composé, boire, Il faut + infinitive.

Summer Term – *Topics:* physical appearances, parts of the body, ailments, leisure activities. *Grammar:* further adjectives and comparative adjectives, mettre, direct object pronouns, expressions using avoir.

Geography

Three periods weekly

As modern Geography is centred around the study of man's interaction with the environment our studies take place on a thematic rather than regional basis. The course aims to introduce pupils to the basic elements of the world's major climatic and vegetation environments and demonstrate how man is limited by them, has adapted to them or modified them in ways which may be destructive. The course touches on many topics and 'issues' well covered by the media.

Autumn Term

- Ecosystems and food webs
- When ecosystems go wrong, for example, the Aral Sea
- Elements of the world's climatic regions
- Measurement of components of weather and the use of climate graphs
- The Tropical Rainforest including problems associated with deforestation.

Spring /Summer Term

- Individual investigation of plant adaptation in the Tropical Rainforest
- Tropical diseases such as malaria, and cholera.
- The 'Greenhouse' Effect and Global Warming
- The environmental impact of tourism on the environment.
- A selection of studies of tourism in different locations including Antarctica, Mediterranean and Alpine ski resorts.
- Group investigation of patterns of tourism in the form.

History

Two periods weekly.

The following topics are covered: The Stuarts – conflict between the monarch and Parliament; The French Revolution; The Industrial Revolution

Latin

Three periods weekly – girls taught in form groups

We continue to follow the Cambridge Latin Course. Unit I stages 11-12 and Unit II stages 13-16 are covered in Year 8. The background material focuses on family and town life in Pompeii cAD70 and Romano-British life including Fishbourne Villa.

Mathematics

Five periods each week; girls are divided into two broad bands across the year, with two upper sets and three middle sets.

The topics studied fall broadly into these headings: Perimeter and area – to include the circle, fractions, decimals and percentages, further work on directed numbers, ratio proportion and scale, statistics, transformations, algebra, working with numbers, further equations, further probability, Pythagoras' theorem, sequences, co-ordinates and graphs, geometric constructions, further percentages, enlargement, nets of solids.

Languages - Second Language Option

Chosen as ab initio languages from German, Italian, Russian or Spanish. Three periods each week.

- **German**

We use *Klasse 1* as our textbook. It comes with cassettes and a pupil's workbook which contains exercises practising the elements that are introduced in each chapter. In the first few lessons pupils learn the classroom language, greetings, the alphabet, numbers, time, date and colours. They are then taught to describe themselves and their friends and family (Units 1 and 2). Because the majority of girls come on the Christmas markets trip in December we then jump to Unit 5, food and drink, Unit 6, money and shopping and Unit 8, directions and finding one's way around the town. In the second term the girls learn about school, Unit 3, about their home and rooms and furniture, Unit 4 and about their hobbies, Unit 7. In the third term we talk about means of transport, second part of Unit 8 and introduce the future tense.

- **Italian**

Textbook: *Amici* by Carole Shepherd and Derek Aust, Oxford University Press, 2004 (+ additional materials)

The course aims to establish pupils' confidence in communicating in Italian with a good pronunciation and intonation. It will establish writing in Italian on a regular basis, ensuring a solid core vocabulary. It will introduce the cultural and geographic background to Italy.

Topics: Greetings, countries and nationalities, alphabet and spelling, daily routines, dates, days of the week, months, seasons, numbers 0-100, introducing people, talking about the family, describing people and pets, agreeing and disagreeing, talking about towns and houses, describing rooms and furniture.

Grammar: nouns and adjectives, agreement of adjectives and nouns, indefinite, definite articles, present tense regular verbs, *essere, avere*, reflexive verbs, *fare, andare, uscire, piace, piacciono, da quanto tempo, vorrei*, formal address, possessive adjectives, *questo,*, prepositions + article, *c'e, ci sono*.

- **Russian**

The Year 8 programme includes the following: Alphabet; Numbers; Greetings and classroom objects; Café; Shopping; Town (adjectives); Weather; School (regular verbs).

- **Spanish**

The focus is generally on communication and in particular in conversation so as to enable students to speak as much Spanish as possible about a wide variety of topics.

By the end of Year 8 students are able to talk and write about everyday events in the present and near future tenses. Topics covered in Year 8 are, among others, personal presentation, their family, school, subjects, school timetable, house, village, hobbies, sports, likes and dislikes, food and visiting a restaurant.

Music

A double period weekly; music is taught in split class groups.

Music is taught through projects which each last for half a term. Lessons involve a mixture of practical work, listening and composition. The programme is as follows:

Autumn Term – scales and melody writing project, including improvisation and ternary form, leading to an understanding of Classical Music. Singing includes rounds and canons and leads to a Big Sing performance as in year 7. Indian music, including study of ragas, talas, drones, improvisation followed by composition and performance.

Spring Term – intervals and chords are investigated as the basis for two composition projects using diatonic intervals and the 12 bar blues. Studio work includes a look at the programme 'Sequel'.

Summer Term - Form Song Competition preparation and performance. Video review of competition, followed by practical work based on Mussorgsky's 'Pictures at an Exhibition'.

Physical Education

Four periods each week.

All girls follow the same curriculum in Years 7 and 8 to promote continuity and to allow them to achieve in a range of activities. The main winter curricular activities are: hockey, netball, swimming, gymnastics and dance and the main summer curricular activities are: tennis, athletics and rounders. Extra-curricular activities take place before and after school and during the lunchtimes. These include all the above curricular activities and the following extra activities: football, fencing, cross country, karate, trampolining and dance. We run an extensive fixture programme competing against local schools and enter local, county and national competitions in a number of sports.

Religious Studies

Two periods each week

The course in year eight takes a more philosophical approach to the study of religion, whilst considering a range of different cultures and faiths and asking some fundamental questions about life. Using the core text *Some Hard Questions*, we explore the relationship between religion and science and issues relating to the meaning and purpose of life. As in year 7, a wide range of material from the world's religions is incorporated into the philosophical nature of the syllabus and as well as developing thinking skills, girls are encouraged to be analytical and evaluative and to develop an ability to learn independently, these being the objectives of the year's two assessments.

Science

The three sciences are taught separately in Year 8 by specialist teachers, two periods each weekly.

The girls continue the 'Thinking through Science' course which was started in Year 7.

The Course is aimed at the higher ability band of pupils and it encourages them to think and articulate their thinking in a challenging but supportive environment. It aims to develop the thinking skills and reflective abilities, which are so important in shaping an understanding of Science. The individual Science subject topics are taught by specialists within the appropriate subject area

- **Biology**

Topic 1	Food and Digestion
Topic 2	Structure and Function of the ear and eye.
Topic 3	Respiration and Circulation
Topic 4	Microbes and Disease
Topic 5	Ecology

- **Chemistry**

Topic 1	Separating mixtures
Topic 2	Observation exercises and chemical change
Topic 3	Rocks and acid weathering
Topic 4	Atoms and elements
Topic 5	Analysis
Topic 6	Compounds and mixtures

- **Physics**

Topic 1	Magnets and Electromagnets
Topic 2	Light
Topic 3	Heating and Cooling

Technology

Three periods each week; taught in half class groups.

By undertaking a series of interesting and stimulating projects and through acquisition of both traditional and technological design and making skills, girls are encouraged, nurtured and taught how to become autonomous, creative, innovative and independent problem solvers.

In Year 8 a wide variety of both ICT and DT skills and processes are covered. The 555 electronic timer product is designed and made in the workshop; textiles and related sustainability issues are taught through designing and making a bag. HTML and Dreamweaver are also covered as are orthographic and designing mechanisms. There is also a project designing and making metal cutlery or similar tools incorporating the use of smart materials. There is a block on spreadsheets. The use of written and drawn specifications and ongoing review and evaluation of work is a key component to this course.

Activity Slot

All Year 8 pupils have one timetabled activity slot each week. A wide range of activities is available from which the girls choose (e.g. music, sports, IT) and small group speech and drama lessons also take place during this time.

PSHCE

PSHCE topics are covered both with specialist speakers and in the regular twice-weekly tutorial time with form tutors.

Yr8curriculum/July 2008