



YARM SCHOOL

EDUCATING FOR LIFE

# First Year Curriculum Book

2024-2025



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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to give parents and pupils information and advice about the First Year curriculum and academic arrangements at Yarm School. In particular, we hope it will help parents to support and monitor the progress of their child, developing the vital home-school partnership.

The first priority for all teachers of the First Year in September is to help pupils to settle into the pattern of work in the Senior School and to adjust to the new demands made upon them. In some subjects this may mean that a short period of time is allocated to recapping familiar things from Year Six. However, the pace of work will quickly pick up and pupils can expect to be challenged academically.

Above everything else, we will expect pupils to be committed to doing their best at all times. Concentration and positive engagement in class, coupled with a diligent approach to homework, will be the keys to fulfilling their potential.

### The First Year Curriculum

The First Year curriculum is designed to be broad, varied and academically challenging, with priority given to traditional subjects. Pupils will have to cope with the demands of studying more subjects, with more teachers, and in a range of different rooms located around the site.

### Subjects studied:

(The number of allocated lessons per week is shown in brackets.)

Art (2)	History (2)	Religion, Philosophy & Ethics (1)
DT (2)	Languages (4) *	Science (2)
Computing (1)	Maths (4)	SPaCE (1)**
English (3)	Music (1)	
Geography (2)	PE (1) & Games (2)	

\*Languages - The Languages Carousel offers pupils experience of French, German, Latin and Spanish. Pupils choose two languages to continue with in the Second Year.

\*\*SPaCE - SPaCE is Social, Personal & Citizenship Education.

All pupils also participate in the two timetabled Activity afternoon sessions each week, choosing from a very wide range of options.

### **Teaching Groups**

Whereas the pastoral grouping (based on the House) remains constant, the organisation of the academic or teaching groups changes considerably as pupils progress through the Senior School. Initially pupils have most of their lessons in “mixed ability forms” but gradually more subjects become “setted” by ability and, increasingly, as pupils start to make choices between academic subjects, many subjects are taught in “option blocks”. These changes, as pupils grow older, force them to work with a wider range of other students and widen their circle of friends.

1. Forms: On joining the senior school in the First Year pupils are placed in one of five or six mixed ability teaching forms. We try to include a roughly equal number from each House / Tutor group and to achieve a roughly equal balance of genders. It is worth noting that these are working groups, rather than social groups, and that they will become decreasingly significant to the pupils. They usually change when pupils move from First to Second Year.
2. Sets: In some subjects pupils progress better if they are grouped with children of similar ability so that they move fast enough to achieve their potential, yet not so fast that they get left behind. Decisions on the composition of sets are based upon recent formal assessment results and consultations with the teachers of that year group. Set allocations and changes are determined according to the professional judgement of the Head of Department. Sets are reviewed periodically (typically after any significant mid-year assessments and the end-of-year examinations) and usually a small number of pupils are moved if the Head of Department feels that is justified.

In the First Year, pupils are initially allocated to broad-based groups for Maths based primarily on their performance in the Maths entrance assessment, together with any contextual advice from the Prep School or other schools as appropriate. It is sometimes the case that there is movement between groups – for example, before Christmas when the results of mid-year class tests and baseline testing become available.

There are no option choices to be made for the First Year.

## ART

First Year pupils have two lessons of Art per week. They follow a varied course of study, which provides opportunities for all to achieve success, whatever their abilities. The aim of the lower school curriculum is to develop a general range of skills and techniques whilst exploring the work of artists and designers: both old masters and contemporary artists.

Sketchbook work is vital and pupils will produce work in sketchbooks in the classroom and occasionally at home. Homework will be given periodically but will not necessarily be drawing; pupils may be asked to research a topic, or collect and bring something into their next Art lesson. The basic elements in art and design, including drawing from direct observation, are explored: pupils usually investigate one topic per term. At the start of the Autumn and Summer terms pupils will spend time learning various drawing techniques and these skills will be formally assessed at the end of the first half of the Summer term.

### **Term One - Drawing Techniques and Colour Theory**

The main focus this term will be on exploring a variety of drawing techniques, as well as learning about the theory of colour and the mixing and application of paint.

### **Term Two – Homage to an Artist**

Pupils will explore the work of an artist who has been selected because of their painting style and use of colour. Pupils will put into practice their understanding of the theory of colour to paint a replica of the artist's work, paying close attention to accurate colour mixing.

### **Term Three – Observational Drawing**

The pupils will continue to develop their drawing skills and ability to observe shape and form, in addition to developing their use of tone.

For further information, please contact Ms Liz Stebbings, Head of Art.  
([es@yarmschool.org](mailto:es@yarmschool.org))



# COMPUTING

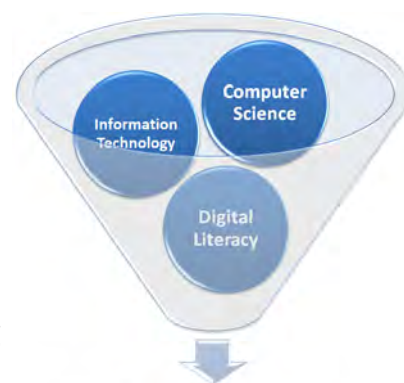
## Overview

Pupils in the First Year study a Computing curriculum focusing on three main elements: Computer Science, Information Technology and Digital Literacy.

In the Computer Science element, pupils study the foundational principles and practices of computation and computational thinking, along with their application in the design and development of simple computer systems.

The Information Technology element deals with the creative and productive use of computer systems, including how online collaborative workspaces can be utilised to improve productivity.

In the final element, Digital Literacy, pupils will develop their ability to use computer systems confidently and effectively, including the use of the Internet and communication via e-mail.



## First Term

- **Digital Literacy- Folder Structure, Email and Netiquette.** In this first topic, pupils will learn how to safely and effectively use the common locally hosted and online tools that they will use during their time at Yarm School.
- **Digital Literacy- e-Safety- Digital Resilience.** Throughout this topic, pupils investigate the positive and negative experiences young people have online, with the aim of developing the necessary skills to understand when they are at risk online, how to seek help and how to recover if things go wrong. Further resources related to the themes and approaches explored in this topic can be found on our Parent Portal.
- **Information Technology- Applied Digital Skills.** In this topic, pupils engage in several short projects to enable them to become proficient users of a variety of Google and Microsoft products.





## Second Term

- **Computer Science- PC Basics.** In this topic, pupils explore how computer systems process, represent and store data. As well as developing an understanding of the fundamental components that make up computer systems and the roles they carry out.
- **Computer Science- Adventure Game Design.** This topic gives pupils the opportunity to learn a variety of core programming constructs using the Python programming language, with the aim of designing and developing a text based adventure game, reminiscent of the '80s classic Zork.



## Third Term

- **Computer Science- Introduction to Programming- Micro:Bit.** In this topic, pupils will apply the understanding of computer hardware and programming that they developed in term two by carrying out a thematic programming project using BBC Micro:bits.
- **Information Technology- Computers in Business.** This topic presents pupils with an opportunity to apply all their Computing Skills in a collaborative project where they will aim to provide a variety of high quality products to a corporate client. These will include corporate branding, a finance spreadsheet, an AI chatbot and an app to showcase the company's products.



## iDEA- The Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award

In addition to the curriculum outlined above, pupils in the First Year will also have the opportunity to complete The Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award. This programme will help the pupils develop digital, enterprise and employability skills. Through our series of online challenges, they can 'win' career and life enhancing badges, unlock new opportunities and, ultimately, gain industry recognised awards that help them stand out from the crowd.



## Contact

For further information, please contact Mr Mark Bridle, Head of Computing.  
([mark.bridle@yarmschool.org](mailto:mark.bridle@yarmschool.org))

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Design and Technology is a wide-ranging subject encompassing three different material specialisms:

- Resistant Materials
- Textiles
- Electronics
- Drawing Skills

However, basic skills are common to all: these are taught consistently throughout the Foundation Course in the lower school.

The aims of the First Year course are several, but all are set against the fundamental principles of iterative design through practical making and experimentation. The lessons provide pupils with an elementary understanding of a range of materials, equipment and processes, introduced through a number of focused practical tasks.

This introduction to practical activity is balanced against the requirement for safe working practice and as an introduction to the year, all pupils undertake a Health and Safety awareness project.

Typical workshop projects include:

- Laminated shoehorn
- Twisted aluminium key fob
- Acrylic desk tidy
- Fridge Magnets
- Wooden Robots
- Maze Games
- Steady Hand Game
- Juggling balls



An important aspect of the First Year is that all pupils will be guided so that they achieve successful outcomes, build self-confidence and personalise their work so as to take ownership of it. A highlight of the course from the pupils' perspective is that they are introduced to a very large workshop, specialist textiles design room and electronics lab; all extensively equipped to reflect modern and traditional techniques.

For further information, please contact Mr Daniel Spence, Head of Design & Technology. ([ds@yarmschool.org](mailto:ds@yarmschool.org))

## ENGLISH

At Yarm School, English is taught through its Literature. Pupils will encounter a range of high-quality reading material over the course of the year including a novel, a play, some poetry, and a range of non-fiction texts.

Through this reading material, we aim to help the pupils to understand six key concepts that are central to success in the study of English.

1. Literary texts are constructs like paintings or musical compositions: there is an artist at work seeking to create meaning.
2. Every text is an argument intended to influence how we see ourselves, each other and our world.
3. While it is possible to misinterpret a text, there are also many different 'right answers' in English.
4. Language has depth: individual words have multiple layers of meaning that you can explore to enrich your interpretations.
5. Texts make meaning from patterns of ideas, imagery, language and sound that are often astonishingly intricate, complex and beautiful.
6. Literature is an enormous conversation about life: texts are informed by the contexts in which they are written and received, and by the work of other writers.

Over the course of the year, pupils can also expect to produce a wide range of formal writing tasks that fall into three broad genres.

- Creative writing, such as stories, poems and descriptions
- Non fiction writing, such as speeches, letters or newspaper articles
- Analytical writing, such as literature essays

Through all of these writing tasks, students will be aiming to continually build their own vocabulary choices, their sentence construction, and their ability to generate mature ideas that they structure effectively and imaginatively over their writing.

Once a term, one of these tasks will be used as a whole year group assessment, which helps us more precisely monitor progress in these skills.

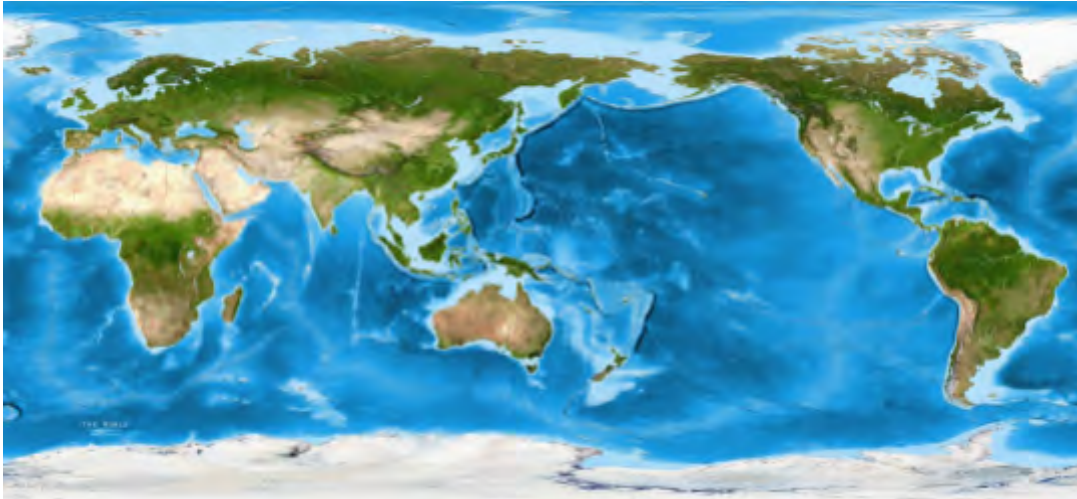
There are regular Library visits within English lessons, which give opportunity for wider recreational reading, for supervised study using the facilities, or for browsing. This allocation of curricular time reflects the importance placed upon

regular reading habits by the English Department. The English teachers are very active within these sessions, encouraging reading, helping reluctant readers to find accessible material, and encouraging the more avid in their onward journeys. We occasionally have visits from authors and performers, and we enter teams for various literary general knowledge competitions. We also encourage pupils to enter poetry or story writing competitions.

For further information, please contact Mr Liam Gilbert, Head of English.  
([lfg@yarmschool.org](mailto:lfg@yarmschool.org))

## GEOGRAPHY

Geography is a subject that seeks to explain the physical nature of our environment and its intimate relationship with human society.



First Year Geography offers pupils an introduction to the core principles of the subject. Pupils are introduced to Physical Geography and Human Geography, along with some of the skills that geographers use, such as map reading, climate graphs and atlas work. Pupils study settlement, followed by weather and climate. They will learn about the landscape, human impact and management of Antarctica. First Year pupils explore the causes and impacts of climate change. They will consider what is meant by sustainable development and ways of being more sustainable. Summer term sees the introduction to a geographical enquiry. In groups, pupils create their own hypotheses for an enquiry on Yarm High Street; their first experience of fieldwork in the senior school.



Sir David Attenborough once said of Geography that it 'teaches us of the wide varieties of our planet...it is an essential subject of the modern individual'. Here at Yarm School, we aim to give our pupils the tools and the understanding to help them in our ever-evolving world!

For more information, contact Mrs Kirsten Baines, Head of Geography.  
([klb@yarmschool.org](mailto:klb@yarmschool.org))

## HISTORY

**“ The study of History is the beginning of wisdom.”  
Jean Bodin**

First Year pupils have an overarching enquiry question for the year this is:

1. How has war and religion shaped society?

The pupils are introduced to the major influences of religion and conflict on the development of society in Britain and beyond. This then feeds into our Second and Third Year curriculums where pupils will take a broader global perspective.



Pupils will look at the theme of conflict and its impact on society. Starting with Viking invasions, Alfred the Great and the creation of England. Pupils will then have an opportunity to learn about the ‘race for the Crown’ in 1066, the Norman Conquest and its impact on life in England.

We then jump forward and look at how the English Civil War shaped the modern British political system before assessing the extent to which Total War in the 20th Century impacted society and the development of civil rights.

Pupils then look at the role religion has played in the development of society. They begin by considering the importance of religion during the Medieval age before analysing the importance of the Reformation – in particular, the reasons behind Henry VIII’s break with Rome and the main religious changes under each Tudor monarch. We see how continuing religious strife lay behind such key events as the Spanish Armada, the Gunpowder Plot and the Civil Wars.

“Take a live frog and put its belly on the plague sore. The frog will swell up and burst. Keep doing this with further frogs until they stop bursting. Some people say that a live toad will do the job better.”



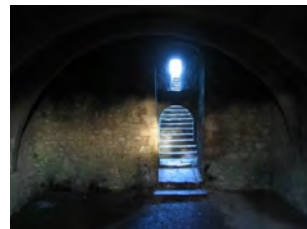
- a cure for the Black Death from a Medieval medical book.



To introduce the course, we ask the question, 'What is History?' and look at how we, as historians, rely on different types of sources – artefacts, archaeological, picture and written sources - to find out about the past.

Throughout the year, pupils develop their ability to evaluate historical sources and see how and why events, people, situations and changes have been interpreted in different ways.

*'As we delved into the detail of the life of people from a generation who lived in a totally different world to the one we inhabit now, I began to get a feel for what many ordinary people would have seen, heard or smelt.'*



During History lessons, pupils communicate their ideas and present their answers to different historical enquiries through a variety of means, including extended written work, diagrams, ICT, class discussion, group presentations and roleplay.

In written work, emphasis is put on the importance of focusing clearly on the issue in question and including relevant detail to support ideas and arguments. Pupils are encouraged to weigh up evidence and draw their own conclusions, and to express their work clearly and fluently.

As a department, we aim to communicate our own interest in and enthusiasm for the subject, enabling us to make all pupils' study of History an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

*'A nation which does not know what it was yesterday,  
does not know what it is today, nor what it is trying to do.'*  
- Woodrow Wilson

Further information is available from the Head of History, Mr Tim Taylor.  
([tdt@yarmschool.org](mailto:tdt@yarmschool.org))



## LATIN

All pupils study Latin as part of a carousel arrangement in the First Year, using the Cambridge Latin Course. Pupils are introduced to the language, and to the lives of ancient Romans in general, through the stories of Caecilius and family, living in the city of Pompeii in the first century CE.



The course aims to develop fluency in reading the language and the skills to produce clear and accurate translations in good English. Pupils are introduced to Latin's case system early on and learn the difference between a subject and an object, as well as some of the different tenses of Latin. An important focus of the First Year course is the learning of vocabulary, and pupils are encouraged to understand the influence that Latin has had on our own language (and other languages they may be studying) and to use those links to help support their learning.

Another focus of the year is the exploration of Roman everyday life, with the opportunity to explore some of the differences between our society and theirs, be it through the Roman entertainments of the gladiators, or the raucous performances of Roman comedies, or the rigours of Roman education.

For further information please contact Mr John Hall, Head of Classics. ([jsh@yarmschool.org](mailto:jsh@yarmschool.org))

## MATHEMATICS

Pupils in the First Year follow a course of study based around, and extended from, the Mathematical Enhancement Programme (MEP) scheme of work. This provides a spiral curriculum, taking a more in-depth view as the course unfurls over the First and Second Years. The same course of study is used across all classes in the year group, enabling each student to reach their full potential within their class. All pupils cover the same topics but the depth of knowledge gained from each topic and speed of delivery will depend on the group itself. Details of the course of study can be found on the department website <https://sites.google.com/yarmschool.org/yarmschoolmaths/yeargroups/ys1>.

Pupils will experience a variety of learning methods from the traditional to the most up-to-date. The Dr Frost platform is frequently used for class demonstrations, practice and activities. Students are encouraged to use this for regular practice of key skills in their own time. Homework plays an important part in helping pupils practise and develop their mathematical skills: usually pupils will receive two pieces of homework per week. One of these may well be routine independent Dr Frost practice. Additional homework could come in a variety of forms: worksheets, Dr Frost set tasks, research and revision.

Pupils are taught in two bands at different times. There are usually two or three broad ability sets in each band. This means that the number of their First Year Maths set does not necessarily equate to their Maths ability level relative to the year group as a whole.

First Year pupils will sit 3 common assessments at the beginning of November, March and a Summer assessment just before May half term. There will also be less formal diagnostic assessments administered by teachers throughout the year. The results of the 3 common assessments, alongside professional judgement from their teacher, are used to provide a context for any change in grouping for the pupils' 2nd year course.

Pupils who demonstrate ability and enthusiasm during the year will be able to participate in the Junior Maths Challenge and team competitions.

Further information is available from Mr David Yates, Head of Maths. ([djy@yarmschool.org](mailto:djy@yarmschool.org))

## MODERN LANGUAGES



The main aim of the Modern Languages Department is to realise every pupil's linguistic potential at each stage of their progression through the school. Flexibility, tracking and streaming allow us to identify strengths and weaknesses and ensure that pupils are being taught at an appropriate level, depending on their ability. All pupils study French, German and Spanish as part of a carousel arrangement with Latin in First Year. All pupils continue with two languages into Second Year and ultimately all have to take at least one foreign language through to GCSE level in Fifth Year.

On entry to the Senior School, pupils are placed in mixed ability teaching groups for Modern Languages and Latin. The four languages (French, German, Spanish and Latin) are taught on a paired basis, alternating weeks. For example, French and German might be paired, with 2 lessons of French one week, then 2 lessons of German the next; in this instance, Spanish would be paired with Latin, with 2 lessons per week alternating language. During First Year, pupils will be asked to choose 2 languages with which to continue into Second Year. Beyond this, languages are Optional Subjects in Third Year and above; pupils must continue to learn at least ONE language through to GCSE level in Fifth Year, but many will also choose to continue with a second language at GCSE level.

Languages are taught communicatively, using a wide range of resources. New vocabulary and structures are introduced through the media of speaking and listening and are then reinforced through reading and writing. Regular use is made of the school's intranet and internet facilities. The department also has interactive whiteboards in every teaching room and various computer suites at its disposal. We use in-house booklets to teach modern languages in First Year, supported with a range of other educational resources such as Quizlet and language specific materials.

Topics and grammatical concepts covered in French in the First Year may include:

<b><i>Topics</i></b>	<b><i>Grammar</i></b>
Family and pets	Prepositions of place
Clothes and colours	Present tense

TV programmes	Future tense (aller + infinitive)
Meeting friends	Perfect tense
Free time activities	Reflexive verbs
Daily routine	Adjectives
Special events/holidays	The Partitive
The time	Possessive adjectives
My house/town	Nouns
	The negative

The main topics and grammatical concepts covered in German in the First Year are as follows:

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Grammar</b>
Talking about myself	Nouns
Numbers	Articles
Talking about my school	Adjectives
Talking about my family and pets	Present tense verb forms
Talking about my free time	Word order

The main topics and grammar covered in Spanish in the First Year may include:

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Grammar</b>
Phonics	Nouns
The alphabet and spelling words	Articles
Talking about myself	Adjectives
Numbers, dates and months	Present tense verb forms
Colours	Possessive adjectives
Talking about my family and pets	Impersonal verbs

For further information, please contact:

The Head of Modern Languages and French, Mr A. Bridges  
[ajwb@yarmschool.org](mailto:ajwb@yarmschool.org))

or the Head of German, Mr T. Fellows ([tcf@yarmschool.org](mailto:tcf@yarmschool.org))

or the Head of Spanish, Mrs B. Addison ([bw@yarmschool.org](mailto:bw@yarmschool.org)).

## MUSIC

All pupils study Music in the First Year, acquiring an understanding of the building blocks of music. There will be plenty of opportunities for composing and performing in addition to listening, appraising and theory work. Vocal work will be an integral part of the co-curricular life of the school. As part of the curriculum we aim to encourage all pupils to participate in an exciting performance opportunity in school.

### MUSICAL ELEMENTS:

Melody

Articulation

Dynamics

Tempo

-

Structure

Harmony and Tonality

Instrumentation

Rhythm

Texture

Pupils will gain insight into the building blocks of music through a series of varied practical and theoretical tasks. There will be an emphasis on learning through doing, so there will be lots of exciting practical activities, whilst also deepening their understanding of the subject. Through our exploration of rhythm and melody, pupils will compose machine-like composition, extend their knowledge of notation, enjoy code-breaking, learn about minimalism and compose using Sibelius software. Pupils will immerse themselves in instruments of the orchestra, learn about texture through African drumming and appreciate the power of the pentatonic scale. Pupils at Yarm will not be daunted by learning the bass and treble clefs as they will explore the grand staff with ease! Pupils will learn about a variety of scales including pentatonic, whole tone and chromatic scales, before creating their own programmatic compositions. Tempo and structure will be reinforced throughout the course and culminate in a stomp-style presentation at the end of the Summer Term.



For further information, please contact Mr Rob Williams (rcw [@yarmschool.org](mailto:rcw@yarmschool.org))

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Our aim is that all pupils leave Yarm School having had a positive and enjoyable experience of the Physical Education programme. The skills and understanding they will acquire will enable them to follow a healthy lifestyle long after they have left school. As a traditional school, team games and the ethos behind them form the background to our Physical Education programme. They are a fundamental part of the general school ethos and, as such, are viewed as part of our core curriculum. We attempt to establish a balance between breadth and depth, balancing commitment to the sports we focus on each term in Games lessons with the wish to give pupils a wide and varied physical education through timetabled lessons and Activities.

The major Games for each term are supported with a comprehensive fixture list and team players are expected to attend weekly team practices and matches. In addition to this, the weekly Activities sessions allow pupils to undertake a wide range of sports that in many cases will have been initially covered in their P.E. lessons. In Games lessons at certain times in the year, pupils are given a degree of choice of sports. Below is an outline year planner for both Games and P.E. This can vary due to the weather, but we always aim to cover as much of the programme as possible.

All fixtures, match information and team selections can be found on the school website via the link to the school sports page. More current information and the up-to-date progress of the teams is posted on the twitter accounts: @yarmgirlsgames and @yarmboysgames.

For further information please contact:

Mr Gary Ferguson, Director of Sport. ([gf@yarmschool.org](mailto:gf@yarmschool.org))

Ms Nicola Hodgson ([nh@yarmschool.org](mailto:nh@yarmschool.org)) is specifically responsible for girls' PE and Games and Mr Chris Webb for boys' PE and Games ([cacw@yarmschool.org](mailto:cacw@yarmschool.org)).

## **AUTUMN TERM**

### **GAMES**

<b>BOYS</b>	<b>RUGBY / HOCKEY</b>
<b>GIRLS</b>	<b>NETBALL / HOCKEY</b>

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

<b>BOYS</b>	<b>X COUNTRY/FITNESS</b>	<b>HALF TERM</b>	<b>FOOTBALL</b>
<b>GIRLS</b>	<b>DANCE</b>		<b>X COUNTRY/FITNESS</b>

## **SPRING TERM**

### **GAMES**

<b>BOYS</b>	<b>HOCKEY / RUGBY</b>
<b>GIRLS</b>	<b>HOCKEY / NETBALL</b>



**SPRING TERM**

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

<b>BOYS</b>	<b>BASKETBALL</b>	<b>HALF TERM</b>	<b>ATHLETICS</b>
<b>GIRLS</b>	<b>FOOTBALL</b>		<b>ATHLETICS</b>

**SUMMER TERM**

**GAMES**

<b>BOYS</b>	<b>ATHLETICS / CRICKET</b>
<b>GIRLS</b>	<b>CRICKET / ATHLETICS</b>

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

<b>BOYS</b>	<b>TENNIS</b>
<b>GIRLS</b>	<b>TENNIS</b>

## RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS

The First Year pupils study a course in Religion, Philosophy & Ethics covering 'Foundations of Faith', 'Faith in Action' and 'Ultimate Questions'.

Pupils focus on what is meant by commitment and belonging to Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Humanism. The pupils study the foundations of these major religions, how a religious believer's beliefs impact their way of life, their moral outlook and how they treat the world around us. The pupils then examine examples of key individuals and charities that demonstrate putting faith into action.

The pupils also examine key introductory philosophical and ethical debates, including arguments for and against the existence of God, creation, artificial intelligence and life after death.

In the Summer Term, First Year pupils study 'Philosophy in Film', examining key philosophical concepts in the film 'Inside Out', as well as creating an entry for the Religion, Philosophy and Ethics annual journal 'REflections'.

This course encourages pupils to learn about religion by developing their knowledge of various world religions through exploring a variety of means of expressing and interpreting religious belief, through storytelling, art, mythology and symbolism. It also enables the pupils to extend their understanding of religions' influence by looking at related ways of living, values and cultures in different parts of the world.

For further information, please contact the Head of Religion, Philosophy & Ethics, Mrs Sophie Lodge. ([sophie.lodge@yarmschool.org](mailto:sophie.lodge@yarmschool.org))



## SCIENCE

This course aims to provide pupils with a solid foundation in scientific inquiry and experimentation, with a focus on laboratory safety, physical and chemical changes, energy and electricity, cells and systems, and acids and alkalis. We will introduce pupils to the three sciences as separate disciplines but still within an integrated science course that will be familiar to them.

Through this course, pupils will develop their scientific thinking skills, including their ability to identify independent, dependent, and control variables in experiments, make factual observations, interpret data, and draw conclusions based on evidence. They will also learn how to work safely in a laboratory, correctly use and draw lab equipment, measure various properties such as volume, temperature, length, and mass, and perform simple scientific calculations.

The course will cover a range of topics, including the three main states of matter, changes of state, dissolving and evaporating, chemical reactions, energy stores and transfers, circuit symbols and diagrams, specialised cells and their adaptations, cellular organisation, and the systems of the human body.

Pupils will be encouraged to develop their critical thinking skills, engage in hands-on activities and experiments, and work collaboratively with their peers. They will also be introduced to the importance of science in our everyday lives and how it can help us better understand the world around us.

The course will ensure the development of pupils' understanding of science to at least a common baseline before beginning to study each science separately in the Second Year.

## **Skills to acquire during the year**

- Pupils will develop confidence in the correct construction of experimental results tables and graphical representation, analysis and interpretation of experimental data.
- Pupils will be safely introduced to the exciting environment of science laboratory work.
- Pupils are introduced to more complex scientific vocabulary.

## **Key Questions**

The main question explored by this course will be:

“How do we understand and investigate the physical world around us?”

This question can be broken down into two further questions:

- How can we use scientific methods to gather and analyse accurate data?
- How can scientific knowledge and understanding be applied to explain observed phenomena and to address real-world problems?

## **Enjoyable Aspects**

- For many pupils this is their first exposure to a school laboratory and the prospect of using equipment such as the Bunsen burner is exciting.
- The ability to explore scientific investigations through hands-on practical work is helpful in increasing their understanding of science principles.

Further information is available from the Head of Science, Dr Paul Prideaux ([pdp@yarmschool.org](mailto:pdp@yarmschool.org))

## First Year SPaCE (PSHE)

In **SPaCE** (Social, Personal and Citizenship Education) we will be following the Thematic PSHE Association scheme of work that is broken down into three key areas:

1. **Health and Wellbeing**



2. **Relationships**



3. **The Wider World**



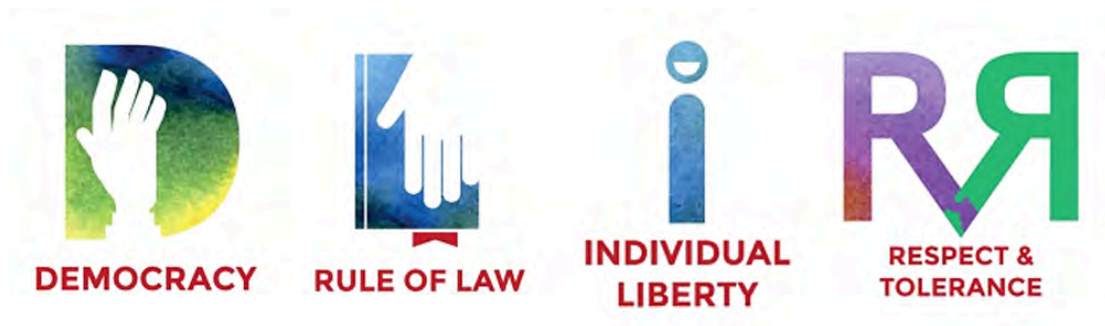
In First Year, we will study two modules from each area: a total of 6 units. As pupils continue up the school, we will build upon these ideas, revisiting certain topics from time to time to develop understanding, so that pupils feel equipped to make well-informed and effective decisions that keep them and others safe.

The topics we will look at this year are;

1. **Transition and Safety:** In this unit we will look at how to manage the change of moving to a new school. This will involve: how to establish and manage friendships; how to identify and manage emotions in a constructive way; how to manage personal strengths and areas for development; personal safety strategies and how to respond in an emergency situation (basic first aid).
2. **Health and puberty:** We will explore how to make healthy lifestyle choices: diet, dental health, physical activity and sleep; how to manage the influences relating to caffeine, smoking and alcohol; how to manage physical and emotional changes during puberty; personal hygiene; how to recognise and respond to inappropriate and unwanted contact (consent); FGM and how to access help and support
3. **Diversity:** In this unit we will learn about: identity, rights and responsibilities; about living in a diverse society; how to challenge prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination; the signs and effects of all types of bullying (including online); how to respond to bullying of any kind, including online, and how to support others.
4. **Developing skills and aspirations:** We will look at how to be enterprising, including skills of problem solving, communication, teamwork, leadership, risk management and creativity. We will look at a broad range of careers and the different qualities required; equality of opportunity; how to challenge stereotypes; the link between values and careers.

5. **Building relationships:** In this unit we will explore: how to develop self-worth and self efficacy; about qualities and behaviours relating to different types of positive relationships; how to recognise unhealthy relationships; how to recognise and challenge media stereotypes; how to evaluate expectations for romantic relationships; about consent, and how to seek and assertively communicate consent.
6. **Financial decision making:** We will look at how to make safe financial choices; about ethical business practices and consumerism; about saving, spending and budgeting.

**In all of these topics you will look at how Fundamental British Values link into different areas of our society.**



For further information, please contact Mr R Ivey, Head of SPaCE.  
([rai@yarmschool.org](mailto:rai@yarmschool.org))

## HOMEWORK

Homework is an important part of a pupil's education and must be undertaken diligently. It may serve a number of purposes. It might involve preparation work to facilitate the next lesson. It might allow time to complete and consolidate classwork. It often involves learning material covered in class, individual reading and research, extended writing and revision for tests or exams.

The school will insist on high standards of performance and parents are asked to support this. Parents can help in the following ways:

1. By providing encouragement and taking an interest in their child's study.
2. By providing a quiet and conducive place for study at home.
3. By contacting the school if their child seems to have insufficient or too much homework, or seems to find it unduly easy or difficult.

There will inevitably be variations in the type and frequency of work set by different teachers and subject areas, but the amount and frequency of homework should be appropriate to support the kind of extension, reinforcement and preparation that will enable high standards of progress. On the whole, First Year pupils should not receive more than one and a half hours of homework per night. However, this is phased during the first few weeks of the year to help pupils to adjust to the transition. The tutor will go through the homework timetable with the tutor group at the start of the academic year and pupils are expected to copy this into their planner.

It usually takes pupils a few weeks to settle into the routine of doing homework and we are aware that this can be a stressful time. Teachers will be sympathetic to any problems in these early weeks and pupils should be encouraged to discuss any difficulties with the subject teacher or with their tutor.

Prior to school examinations or assessments it is expected that homework will increasingly focus on revision and study skills. Academic and pastoral staff will advise on appropriate techniques and all First Year pupils take part in a Study Skills Day. Useful information can also be found in the pupil planner.



## THE SCHOOL LIBRARY

### Supporting learning and encouraging reading for pleasure

The school library aims to support pupils in their studies by providing quality resources that stimulate and enhance learning. To achieve this, we liaise closely with teaching staff to ensure the resources we provide are up-to-date, wide-ranging and relevant to the curriculum. Pupils have access to books, magazines, newspapers and online services.

Classes are regularly brought to the library to research projects, for private reading, and to learn the information literacy skills that will enable individuals to become independent learners. These skills will equip them for higher education and lifelong learning.

Equally important, however, is our role in developing a whole school reading culture, promoting literacy and reading for pleasure. We have an excellent fiction section with books to suit all tastes, as well as graphic novels and special interest magazines.

We regularly invite authors into school to talk about their writing and inspire children to read, and we try to get to know the pupils who use the library individually, providing them with books we know they will like and encouraging them to broaden their interests.

#### Fiction of interest to the First Year

Agbai, P.	The Infinite
Almond, D.	Skellig
Cooper, S.	The Dark is Rising
Dahl, R.	Boy
Dahl, R.	Going Solo
Gaiman, N.	Coraline
Hardy, V.	Brightstorm
Hearn, L.	Across the Nightingale Floor
Horowitz, A.	Russian Roulette
Johnson, C.	Blade and Bone
Laird, E.	The Garbage King
Lively, P.	The Ghost of Thomas Kempe
Orwell, G.	Animal Farm
Paver, M.	Wolf Brother
Placio, R.J.	Wonder
Reeve, P.	Railhead
Riggs, R.	Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children

Rundell, K.	Rooftoppers
Sedgwick, M.	The Dark Horse
Smith, D.	I Capture the Castle
Stroud, J.	Lockwood & Co: The Screaming Staircase
Sutcliffe, R.	The Eagle of the Ninth
Vick, C.	Girl. Boy. Sea.
Ying Tai, C.	The Bear Whispers to Me

The Library is open Monday to Friday 8.15 – 5.30 and the Librarians are Miss Catherine Dixon-Barker and Mrs Deborah Mason.

Mornings: Miss Catherine Dixon-Barker  
([Catherine@yarmschool.org](mailto:Catherine@yarmschool.org) )

Afternoons: Mrs Deborah Mason  
([Deborah@yarmschool.org](mailto:Deborah@yarmschool.org))

## LEARNING SKILLS

The school makes special provision to help pupils with learning difficulties, such as dyslexia. All pupils are screened to check for any such difficulty when they join the Senior School and they may be referred for other diagnostic tests if parents or teachers feel it would be useful. We regard these as being routine “health checks” which can help us to identify an issue and provide appropriate support for the pupil.

The Learning Skills department offers a programme of ‘Booster’ sessions, which run during lunchtimes and as part of the activity programme, for any pupil who wishes to come along. Pupils can develop their maths skills at the Dr Frost Maths Booster, practise their vocabulary for MfL at the Vocabulary Booster or learn how to touch-type during activities. First Year pupils can also join in with the Board Games Club, which runs once a week. This is a great opportunity to make new friends and have some fun. Other sessions, such as handwriting, also run each week but are ‘invite-only’.

All First Year pupils also take part in a Study Skills programme, delivered as part of their tutor programme, which helps them to develop the skills they need to become effective learners.

The Director of Learning Skills is Mrs Elizabeth Bridle. She can provide support for parents and pupils with any concerns and can offer advice regarding onward referrals to Educational Psychologists, Occupational Therapists and the Neurodevelopmental Team.

The Learning Skills Department has specialist teachers and can provide individual or small group lessons, as well as lunchtime skills sessions, to assist pupils. It is also possible to arrange some in-class teaching support.

All teachers have a specific responsibility to work closely with the Director of Learning Skills to ensure that pupils are adequately supported within their department.



For further information please contact Mrs Elizabeth Bridle, Director of Learning Skills. ([elizabeth.bridle@yarmschool.org](mailto:elizabeth.bridle@yarmschool.org))

## FURTHER ADVICE AND HELP

Help and advice are always available in school. Below is a guide to the best person to approach, depending on the nature of the enquiry. Telephone requests can be left with the school office, requesting teachers to call you back. Alternatively an email message can be used to set out the enquiry and allow the teacher to come back to you directly with an answer – this is normally the best approach. Staff email addresses are available on the Parent Portal. Messages for tutors can also be written into the pupil planner.

**Subject Teacher** – a direct approach is usually the quickest and most effective way to resolve issues about academic progress, homework, etc.

**Tutor** – the first point of contact for any pastoral or disciplinary concerns. Also, for academic concerns that relate to more than one subject.

**Head of Department** – for concerns about a specific subject that cannot be resolved by the subject teacher.

**Head of Year** [Mrs Gina Leary] – for concerns that cannot be resolved by the Tutor. ([gal@yarmschool.org](mailto:gal@yarmschool.org))

**Director of Learning Skills** [Mrs Elizabeth Bridle] – for advice, diagnosis and support of specific learning difficulties, such as screening for dyslexia. ([elizabeth.bridle@yarmschool.org](mailto:elizabeth.bridle@yarmschool.org))

**Assistant Director of Studies** [Mr Ashley Law] – is responsible for overseeing pupils' academic progress and a range of academic enrichment programmes. ([adl@yarmschool.org](mailto:adl@yarmschool.org))

**Head of Co-Curricular & Partnerships** [Mr David Boddy] - is responsible for overseeing the Activities programme and co-curricular enrichment in Sport, Music, Drama and Outdoor Education. ([db@yarmschool.org](mailto:db@yarmschool.org))

**Head of Middle School** [Mrs Kath Gratton] – for pastoral/ disciplinary concerns that cannot be resolved by the Head of Year. ([kg@yarmschool.org](mailto:kg@yarmschool.org))

**Deputy Head (Academic)** [Mr Darren Morton] – is the line manager of the Heads of Department and has overall responsibility for all curriculum, teaching and academic matters. ([dkm@yarmschool.org](mailto:dkm@yarmschool.org))

**Senior Deputy Head** [Mrs Alex Kingsbury] – has overall responsibility for all pastoral and disciplinary matters. ([alex.kingsbury@yarmschool.org](mailto:alex.kingsbury@yarmschool.org))







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**Telephone:** 01642 786023

[WWW.YARMSCHOOL.ORG](http://WWW.YARMSCHOOL.ORG)