



YEAR 9

Curriculum Overview:

What will my child be learning up to February Half Term?

A parent-friendly guide linking the school's Learning Journeys with the questions and learning objectives in the supplied Schemes of Work.

During Year 9, students take part in the options process to help them make informed choices about their Key Stage 4 studies. Each week, subject presentations introduce the courses available, explaining what students will learn, how they will be assessed and the future opportunities each subject can offer. The Year 9 curriculum supports this process by giving students experience of a broad range of subjects, helping them recognise their strengths, explore their interests and understand where their learning could lead. Students receive guidance to help them choose a balanced programme that reflects their abilities and aspirations.

Core subjects

English

Learning Journey to February

- The detailed English content below covers the six-week Of Mice and Men unit.
- Of Mice and Men: the contrast between 1920s and 1930s America, the American Dream, the Great Depression, poverty, Hoovervilles and itinerant workers.
- Steinbeck's opening, setting, title, characterisation, symbolism and foreshadowing; close analysis of language and extracts.
- George, Lennie, Curley, Curley's wife, Slim, Candy and Carlson; friendship, loneliness and the significance of Candy's dog.
- Analytical paragraphs and essays supported by quotations and context; creative diary writing from the perspective of a character on the ranch.
- Assessment: comprehension and quotation analysis, an analytical essay, feedback and improvement tasks.

Questions students will be learning to answer

- How did life in 1920s and 1930s America shape the context of the novel?
- What were the American Dream, Great Depression and Hoovervilles, and how do they relate to the characters?
- How does Steinbeck hook the reader through setting, characterisation and foreshadowing?
- What is the significance of the title, and what does it suggest about the story?
- How are George and Lennie presented as itinerant workers?
- How does Steinbeck use language to describe the bunkhouse and introduce the ranch characters?
- How is Curley's wife presented, and what is significant about her position on the ranch?
- How do Slim, Curley and Carlson contribute to characterisation and tension?
- How are friendship and loneliness presented through different characters?
- Why is Candy's relationship with his dog important, and how does its death foreshadow later events?
- How do I support an analytical paragraph or essay with quotations, language analysis and relevant context?
- How do I write an empathetic diary entry using sensory detail, varied vocabulary and language techniques?
- How do I use assessment feedback to improve my reading and writing?

What this develops: Close reading, analysis of language and narrative methods, contextual understanding, evidence-based analytical writing, empathy, creative writing and improvement through feedback.

Mathematics

Learning Journey to February

- Indices and algebra
- Standard form, substitution and formulae
- Algebraic manipulation and expansion

Questions students will be learning to answer

- How do you calculate combinations of indices, fractions and brackets?
- How do you use index laws to simplify expressions?
- How do you use zero, negative and fractional indices?
- What is standard form and why do we need it?
- How do you write and order numbers in standard form?
- How do you substitute into algebraic expressions involving powers?
- How do you change the subject of a formula?
- How do you multiply out double brackets and collect like terms?

What this develops: Algebraic fluency, reasoning and multi-step problem solving.

Religious Studies

Learning Journey to February

- Islam: Hajj, Sawm, Zakat and Muslim practice
- Women in the Bible: Eve, Sarah, Hagar, Esther, Ruth and Mary
- Jerusalem and the Abrahamic faiths

Questions students will be learning to answer

- Why is Hajj important to Muslims?
- What do Sawm and Zakat teach Muslims?
- How do Muslims express values through dress?
- How has the Bible portrayed women?
- How did Esther and Ruth challenge traditional views of women?
- Why is Jerusalem important to Jews, Christians and Muslims?
- What factors affect peace in Jerusalem?

What this develops: Religious literacy, interpretation, comparison and evaluation.

Learning Journey to February

- Autumn 1, Teacher 1: Growth and differentiation – eukaryotic and prokaryotic cells, bacterial growth, aseptic technique, microscopy, diffusion, osmosis, active transport, mitosis, cancer and stem cells.
- Autumn 1, Teacher 2: The periodic table – atomic structure and models, electron arrangements, isotopes, groups and periods, noble gases, alkali metals, halogens, displacement reactions and transition metals.
- Autumn 2, Teacher 1: Acceleration, forces and motion – scalars and vectors, resultant and resolved vectors, Newton's laws, acceleration investigations, equations and velocity-time graphs.
- Autumn 2, Teacher 2: Human interaction with ecosystems – biodiversity, pollution, conservation and global warming; extension work on biomass, farming, biotechnology and food security.
- Spring 1, Teacher 1: Quantitative chemistry – relative formula mass, percentage by mass, conservation of mass, balancing equations, measurement uncertainty, concentration and preparing soluble salts.
- Spring 1, Teacher 2: Heating – internal energy, conduction, convection and radiation, specific heat capacity, investigation of heating and specific latent heat.
- Working scientifically: practical planning and safety, measurements, variables, graph construction and interpretation, scientific calculations, evaluating evidence and improving work after assessment.

Questions students will be learning to answer

- How do eukaryotic and prokaryotic cells differ, and how do I observe cells using a microscope?
- How do bacteria reproduce, and why is aseptic technique important?
- How do diffusion, osmosis and active transport differ, and why are they important in organisms?
- How do I plan, carry out and evaluate an osmosis investigation?
- How do cell division and differentiation support growth and repair?
- What are cancer and stem cells, and how do I evaluate potential uses of stem cells?
- How have atomic models developed, and what are isotopes?
- How does electron arrangement relate to an element's position in the periodic table?
- How do the properties and reactions of noble gases, alkali metals, halogens and transition metals compare?
- How do displacement reactions show the relative reactivity of halogens?
- How do scalar and vector quantities differ, and how do I find resultant forces or vectors?
- How do Newton's laws explain interactions between objects and changes in motion?
- How do I calculate acceleration and investigate the relationship between force, mass and acceleration?
- How do I interpret gradients and areas on velocity-time graphs?
- Why is biodiversity important, and how do pollution, deforestation and agriculture affect it?
- How can people preserve biodiversity, and how does global warming affect ecosystems?
- How do biomass, farming and biotechnology relate to food production and food security?
- How do I calculate relative formula mass and the percentage by mass of an element?
- How do conservation of mass and balanced equations describe chemical reactions?
- How do I calculate concentration and account for measurement uncertainty?
- How do I prepare a pure, dry sample of a soluble salt?
- What is internal energy, and how do conduction, convection and radiation transfer energy?
- How do I calculate and investigate specific heat capacity?
- What is specific latent heat, and how do I calculate energy changes during a change of state?
- How do I use measurements, equations and graphs to reach and evaluate scientific conclusions?

What this develops: Biological, chemical and physical understanding, accurate scientific vocabulary, safe practical work, mathematical application, graph interpretation, critical evaluation and increasingly independent scientific enquiry.

Humanities

Geography

Learning Journey to February

- Tectonic hazards
- Climatic hazards and climate change
- Later supplied topics: dynamic coastal landscapes; resource management and uncertain futures

Questions students will be learning to answer

- What causes tectonic hazards?
- How do climatic hazards affect people and places?
- How does climate change change the risk from hazards?
- What processes shape dynamic coastal landscapes?
- How can resources be managed for an uncertain future?

What this develops: Physical geography, hazard analysis, data interpretation and geographical decision-making.

History

Learning Journey to February

- Suffrage and Empire: suffragists/suffragettes and sources
- British Empire, India, Partition and South Asian migration
- First World War: causes and why it continued
- The Holocaust and interpretations

Questions students will be learning to answer

- How has suffrage changed in Britain over time?
- What methods did the Suffragists and Suffragettes use?
- How were protesters treated?
- Why are there different interpretations of the Suffragettes?
- How did the British Empire develop and how did Britain take over India?
- What was Partition and how did South Asian migration change Britain?
- What were the long-term causes of the First World War?
- Why did the war continue beyond 1914?
- What was the Final Solution and how was it enacted?
- How did Jewish people resist the Nazis?

What this develops: Source analysis, causation, consequence, interpretation and structured historical writing.

Creative Arts and Physical Education

Art

Learning Journey to February

- Autumn: Role Models – experimental portrait drawing, artist research, monoprinting and using the grid method to create an accurate enlarged portrait of a chosen role model.
- Portrait skills: non-dominant-hand, continuous-line and blind drawing; learning through experimentation, practice and mistakes; developing a final A3 portrait.
- Artists and references include Dryden Goodwin, Alexander Khimushin and Chuck Close, alongside discussion of personal role models.
- Spring: Arts & Minds – expressive line, words and typography, watercolour skills and colour theory; researching artists and developing a positive-word artwork.
- Artists include Shantell Martin, Keith Haring, David Shillinglaw, Ben Eine and Lakwena. Extension work explores an illustrated head or heart inspired by David Shillinglaw.

Questions students will be learning to answer

- What are the benefits of experimentation and making mistakes when drawing?
- How can non-dominant-hand, continuous-line and blind drawing help me explore portraiture?
- What makes someone a role model, and how can I communicate my choice through a portrait?
- How do I use the grid method to draw accurately, and how does Chuck Close use a grid?
- What is a monoprint, and how do I create one?
- How do I scale up an image and develop an accurate final A3 portrait?
- How can research into an artist's work inform my own ideas?
- Why does Shantell Martin draw as she does, and how can I explore expressive line and words?
- How do artists use typography to communicate ideas?
- How can I develop letter forms or create my own font?
- How do I mix watercolours, use colour theory and look after a brush?
- How can I plan the layout of a positive word and combine lettering and colour in a final artwork?
- How can David Shillinglaw's work inspire an illustrated head or heart?
- How can I refine my work through practice, research and reflection?

What this develops: Experimental and accurate portrait drawing, proportion and scaling, monoprinting, artist research, expressive line, typography, colour theory, watercolour, composition, independent choices and refinement through practice.

Drama

Learning Journey to February

- Social media and e-safety
- Bouncers
- Verbatim Theatre
- Practitioners: Stanislavski and Frantic Assembly

Questions students will be learning to answer

- How can drama explore social media and e-safety?
- How can performance communicate different perspectives in Bouncers?
- What is verbatim theatre and how is it created?
- How can Stanislavski techniques support believable performance?
- How can Frantic Assembly approaches develop physical theatre?

What this develops: Performance, characterisation, physical theatre, research, audience awareness and evaluation.

Music

Learning Journey to February

- 12-bar blues
- Origins and social context of the blues
- MADTSHIRT musical elements, articulation/dynamics, metronome and Roman numerals

Questions students will be learning to answer

- What are the 12-bar blues and what makes them bluesy?
- How did the blues originate?
- What is MADTSHIRT and how can it help analyse music?
- How do articulation and dynamics shape blues music?
- What is a metronome and how is it used?
- How are Roman numerals used to identify chords?

What this develops: Listening, performance, analysis, harmony and musical vocabulary.

Physical Education

Learning Journey to February

- Football: varied passing and control, turns, shooting under pressure, attacking width, deception, coordinated defending and set-play strategies.
- Netball: accurate passing at speed, court linkage, attacking and defensive principles, centre-pass and circle-play tactics, and adapting game plans.
- Gymnastics: fluent rotations and transitions, controlled balances and inversions, floor-based flight, group synchronisation and creative choreography.
- Handball: possession under pressure, overloads, transitions and fast breaks, positional responsibilities, shooting choices, team tactics and leadership.
- Badminton: recovery to base, forehand rallying, overhead and backhand clears, smash variations, disguised drop shots, singles and doubles tactics.
- Rounders: coordinated fielding, cut-off roles, tactical batting, bowling variations, umpiring and team leadership.
- Basketball: attacking and defensive strategies, zonal and man-to-man defence, controlled passing and dribbling, set shots and lay-ups.
- Fitness: continuous, interval and plyometric training; fitness testing, recording results, interpreting strengths and development needs, and selecting training methods.

Questions students will be learning to answer

- Football: How do passing variations, turns and changes of speed help me retain possession and beat opponents?
- Football: How do I select shots under pressure and organise defensive and set-play strategies?
- Netball: How do I link play through the court and use space and timing to reduce turnovers?
- Netball: How do I adapt marking, centre-pass and circle-play tactics to the opposition?
- Gymnastics: How do rhythm, timing and transitions create a fluent sequence?
- Gymnastics: How do centre of mass, body tension and communication support safe balances and synchronised group work?
- Handball: How do I create overloads and recognise opportunities for a fast break?
- Handball: How do positional responsibilities, shot selection and communication affect team performance?
- Badminton: How do I recover to base and select clears, smashes or disguised drop shots to exploit space?
- Badminton: How do I adapt attacking and defensive strategies in singles and doubles?
- Rounders: How do field placements, cut-off roles and communication improve team fielding?
- Rounders: How do I choose a batting shot or bowling variation for the game situation?
- Basketball: How do zonal and man-to-man defence differ, and when can each be effective?
- Basketball: How do passing, dribbling, shooting and attacking plays help create scoring opportunities?
- Fitness: How do continuous, interval and plyometric training develop different components of fitness?
- Fitness: What do fitness tests measure, and how do I record and interpret my results?
- Fitness: How do I choose training methods that address my strengths and areas for improvement?
- How do I use feedback, officiate fairly and demonstrate leadership during competitive performance?

What this develops: Technical control, tactical judgement under pressure, physical fitness, structured performance, leadership, teamwork, officiating, data recording and evaluation.

Modern Foreign Languages

French

Learning Journey to February

- Media and leisure: television, films, books and magazines
- Internet and digital activities
- Weather, hobbies and recent activities

Questions students will be learning to answer

- What are the various TV programme types in French?
- How do you express opinions about television programmes and films?
- How do you talk about books and how often you read?
- How do you describe Internet activities?
- How do you talk about weather and hobbies?
- How do you say what you did yesterday online using the perfect tense?

What this develops: Listening, speaking, reading and writing with increasingly accurate tense and opinion structures

Spanish

Learning Journey to February

- The detailed Spanish content below covers Half Term 1.
- Half Term 1: Personal interests and free time – likes and dislikes, places, hobbies and frequency; regular present-tense verbs and irregular *ir* and *hacer*.
- Cinema and invitations – inviting a friend, arranging when to go, film genres and opinions about favourite actors.
- Birthdays – dates and months, plans using the near future tense, and accounts of past birthdays using the preterite tense.
- Grammar: preterite *ir* and regular -ar, -er and -ir verbs across pronouns; describing activities, food, drink, presents and opinions.

Questions students will be learning to answer

- How do I express likes and dislikes about hobbies using *me gusta*, *me mola* and *me chifla*?
- How do I use *ir* and *hacer* to describe where I go and what I do in my spare time?
- How do frequency words explain how often I do an activity?
- How do I conjugate regular -ar, -er and -ir verbs to describe activities on different days?
- How do I invite a friend to the cinema and arrange when to go?
- How do I describe film genres and give opinions about favourite actors?
- How do I say when my birthday is and describe plans using the near future tense?
- How do I use the preterite tense of *ir* to describe a past birthday?
- How do I describe what I did, ate, drank and received using regular preterite verbs?
- How do I explain how a birthday went and write a detailed account in the past tense?

What this develops: Listening, speaking, reading, translation and extended writing; expressing opinions, accurate present and near future tenses, and preterite verb forms across different pronouns.

Design & Technology

DT Graphics

Learning Journey to February

- Icon project
- Photoshop image editing and image-board design
- Andy Warhol, commemorative postage stamps and Jimmy Turrell
- T-shirt/tote bag design

Questions students will be learning to answer

- What is an icon and how can visual research represent it?
- How can Photoshop transform and arrange images?
- How can Andy Warhol's style influence an image outcome?
- What makes a successful commemorative postage stamp?
- How can Jimmy Turrell's techniques influence a graphic outcome?
- What makes a good T-shirt/tote bag design?

What this develops: Digital image editing, visual research, graphic communication and presentation.

Food & Nutrition

Learning Journey to February

- Food hygiene and safety: bacterial growth, food poisoning, preventing cross-contamination and applying the four Cs of cleaning, cooking, chilling and avoiding cross-contamination.
- The Eatwell Guide, balanced food choices, energy intake and expenditure, dietary needs, allergies, intolerances and adapting meals.
- Practical cooking: spaghetti Bolognese, apple tarts, spinach, chickpea and potato curry, chicken patties and carrot cake.
- Cooking skills and food science: safe knife work, simmering, heat transfer, gelatinisation, protein coagulation and denaturation, oxidation of apples, and the functions of cake ingredients.
- Increasing independence, accurate recipe following and sensory evaluation of flavour, texture, colour and overall quality.
- Global food challenges, including food poverty, waste and climate change; sustainable choices and careers in the food industry.

Questions students will be learning to answer

- How do bacteria cause food poisoning, and how do I prevent cross-contamination?
- How does the Eatwell Guide support healthier and more balanced food choices?
- How do I prepare spaghetti Bolognese safely and explain changes in ingredients during cooking?
- What is energy balance, and how do energy intake and expenditure affect health?
- Why do cut apples turn brown, and how can I reduce oxidation when preparing apple tarts?
- How do I adapt ingredients or meals for vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free or lactose-free diets?
- What is the difference between a food allergy and an intolerance?
- How do taste, cost, culture and personal needs influence food choices?
- How do I prepare a nutritious curry and explain the contribution of its ingredients?
- How do heat transfer and protein changes affect the safe cooking of chicken patties?
- How do the ingredients in carrot cake create its structure, texture and flavour?
- How do I work independently and evaluate a dish using sensory vocabulary?
- What are the main global food challenges, and how can I reduce waste and make sustainable choices?
- What careers are available in food, and what skills and qualifications do they require?

What this develops: Independent food preparation, safe working practices, nutritional understanding, application of food science, recipe adaptation, sensory evaluation, sustainability and awareness of careers.

DT Resistant Materials

Learning Journey to February

- Designer-inspired storage box project
- Product analysis, design movements and specification
- Timber marking out, cutting, joints and construction
- Assembly, finishing, testing and evaluation

Questions students will be learning to answer

- How do we behave safely in a DT workshop?
- How do you analyse an existing storage box?
- What is a design specification?
- How do we mark out, cut, shape and drill timber accurately?
- How do we produce and evaluate finger joints?
- How do we test a product against its specification?

What this develops: Independence, accuracy, design development, practical manufacture and GCSE-style evaluation.

Learning Journey to February • Computer crime and cyber security – independent use of school systems, recognising suspicious emails, protecting personal information and privacy. • Understanding computers – hardware and software, input-process-output, CPU and the fetch-decode-execute cycle, RAM, ROM and permanent storage. • Binary and data representation – binary/denary conversion, bits and bytes, ASCII, binary addition and simple shifts. • Storage devices – capacity, optical storage and comparing the strengths and limitations of different devices.	Questions students will be learning to answer • How do I organise and submit digital work and communicate appropriately using school systems? • How do I identify phishing and other email scams and explain how to respond? • How can I protect personal information and reduce the risk of identity theft? • How do hardware, software, input, output and storage devices work together? • What happens during the fetch-decode-execute cycle, and how does processor speed affect performance? • How do RAM, ROM and permanent storage differ? • Why do computers use binary, and how do I convert between binary and denary? • How do bits, bytes and ASCII help represent information? • How do I add binary numbers and explain simple shifts? • How is information stored on optical media, and how do I compare storage devices?
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What this develops: Independent digital working, informed online safety decisions, computer systems knowledge, binary calculation, data representation and evaluation of storage choices.

Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education (PSHCE)

The 9 PSHCE sequence is taken from the supplied five-year PSHCE curriculum. The first four half terms are shown here so that the overview matches the September 2026–February 2027 scope.

Half term	Unit	PSHE strand	Rights Respecting Schools	Lesson sequence / focus
Autumn 1	Mental health and wellbeing	Health and Wellbeing	Articles 24, 31	L1 what is mental health?; L2 talking about emotions; L3 coping strategies; L4 exercise for physical and mental health; L5 social media and mental health; L6 influences and self-expression
Autumn 2	Careers and future choices	Living in the Wider World	Articles 28, 29, 32	L7–8 exploring career options; L9 types of work; L10 positive workplaces; L11–12 preparing for KS4 options
Spring 1	Drug education	Health and Wellbeing	Articles 24, 33	L13 vaping; L14 attitudes towards drugs; L15 law and managing risk; L16 alcohol and cannabis; L17 managing influence
Spring 2	Managing risk in relation to the law	Living in the Wider World / Health and Wellbeing	Articles 19, 33, 34, 35, 36, 40	L18–19 gangs and risk; L20 harassment and the law; L21–22 causes/effects of cybercrime; L23 Run, Hide, Tell

The PSHCE programme is part of the wider personal development offer and connects with pastoral work, safeguarding, careers, student voice and the school's values.

Pastoral Programme

The supplied Pastoral Programme provides a consistent weekly structure for Year 9. The table below summarises the Year 9 sessions shown in the 2026–27 programme and the school value/theme attached to each.

Session	Typical placement	Value / theme
Uniform & Equipment Checks	AM registration	Integrity
Collective Worship	AM	Joy
Reading for Joy	AM/PM	Joy
Topical Talk	AM	Curiosity
WRL & Culture	AM	Wisdom
PSHCE / Wellbeing & Self-Regulation	AM	Integrity / Perseverance
Year Group Assembly / Student Voice	PM – Week A	Courage
Theme of the Week & CW Follow-Up	PM	Wisdom
BSL	PM	Inclusion

- **Belonging and student voice:** Year Group Assembly / Student Voice provides opportunities to hear key messages and contribute views.
- **Character and values:** the programme explicitly links regular routines and activities to Integrity, Inclusion, Joy, Curiosity, Perseverance, Courage and Wisdom.
- **Wellbeing and readiness:** Reading for Joy, Wellbeing & Self-Regulation, Topical Talk and WRL & Culture complement the taught curriculum.

How families can support Year 9 learning

- Ask your child to explain one of the key questions from a subject rather than simply asking what they did in the lesson.
- Encourage students to use subject vocabulary when explaining ideas and to revisit work regularly.
- Use Microsoft Teams and the school's usual communication channels to support homework, revision and organisation where relevant.