

Year 8 Curriculum Handbook

one in the spirit

YEAR 8

Curriculum Handbook

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The information contained in this publication is correct at the time of printing but may be subject to change.

YEAR 8

Overview

Introduction

The academic program in Year 8 is designed to provide a breadth of curriculum in which students experience a broad range of subjects. The middle years are a time when students are able to experience a well-rounded, balanced curriculum in keeping with the School's commitment to a holistic education. A range of different skills and knowledge provides students with a solid grounding from which they can make informed choices later in their secondary school development. The curriculum at Year 8 is organised around the traditional disciplines to ensure all students continue to be exposed to a core curriculum. At this level there is also an emphasis on 'learning to learn' activities to build independent learning skills. Each subject area continues to incorporate interpersonal development and personal learning, as well as thinking and communication skills.

Students at Year 8 continue to study a curriculum which provides a strong foundation for future academic studies. Programs are provided in the following areas:

- English
- Humanities (History and Geography)
- Mathematics
- Science
- French
- Art
- Performing Arts
- Health and Physical Education
- Digital Technology (DTE)
- Religious Education
- Product Design Technology
- Visual Communication Design

High Expectations

Casey Grammar School values excellence in the academic studies of our students. Excellence is measured by the growth of each and every student and improvement over time. When students are achieving their personal best, at whatever standard that happens to be, they have achieved true success and they should be extremely proud of their achievements. First and foremost, we expect our students to learn from their mistakes, listen to the advice of their teachers and enjoy the ongoing learning process. Perseverance and self-discipline are two obvious learning habits that underpin the attainment of each student's personal best.

At Secondary School the benefits of homework are well supported by research. There is never a reason for students to say, no homework tonight, nor is there a reason for students to miss deadlines as the school provides many opportunities to catch up during lunch time, after school and during scheduled study periods. Our teachers set effective and achievable homework. In Year 8 students are expected to complete at least an hour of homework most nights during the week; in addition, they may also set aside some time on the week-end for homework tasks which may include:

- Assigned exercises
- Practising key skills
- Reading (in particular, English novels *must* be read prior to being studied in class)

- Independent research
- Preparatory work for class activities
- Reviewing work and summarising class notes

It is important to establish effective learning habits in the middle years. When there is a pattern of students falling behind in their work, a review of the student's learning behaviours will take place in conjunction with the class teacher, Mentor and, if necessary, Head of House.

Reporting of Summative Assessment Tasks

Throughout each semester, students complete assessment tasks set by their teachers that test their level of achievement in the key skills and knowledge in each of their subjects. A series of summative assessment tasks will be reported on in a Statement of Grades issued at the completion of each semester. The Statement of Grades will indicate:

- An overall assessment of whether each student is working at the expected level of the Victorian Curriculum
- An assessment of how well students are performing at that level. This will be indicated on a 6-point scale:

Ungraded

No/Insufficient work. No evidence of student achievement

E

0-9%

Emerging

Well below the expected level

E

10-34%

Developing

Below the expected level

D

35-49%

Progressing

At the expected level

C

50-74%

Proficient

Above the expected level

B

75-89%

Exemplary

Well above the expected level

A

90-100%

Formative Assessment

Mid-term, classroom teachers provide a round of formative feedback ('feed-forward') that will enable students to make progress on upcoming assessment tasks by improving upon targeted key skills and knowledge. Formative feedback is written for students and is based on three questions:

Where is the student currently at with their learning?

Teachers acknowledge key skills and knowledge each student has currently demonstrated. This provides not only affirmation but also direction, informing the student that they should focus their future efforts on other key skills and knowledge.

What is the next step for them to take?

Teachers identify the next level of learning achievement the student should take. This should be specific and it should relate directly to a key skill or some key knowledge in the academic program.

How do they get there?

Here the teacher will outline specific strategies to enable a student to reach the next step.

Please note:

Formative Feedback is based on a schedule that acknowledges the different period allocations per cycle of different subjects:

Category A subjects (6 or more periods per cycle) provide formative feedback no later than Week 5 each term.

Category B subjects (4 or 5 periods per cycle) provide formative feedback no later than Week 9 of each term.

Category C subjects (3 or fewer periods per cycle) provide formative feedback no later than Week 3 of Terms 2 and 4.

Examinations

Students in Year 8 sit practice examinations at the end of each semester.

In most Year 12 subjects, at least 50 per cent of a student's overall grade depends on exam performance; obviously we cannot expect our students to step into the VCE without any prior examination experience. Practice in the earlier years is vital. The ability to analyse questions and respond in a way that is relevant, being discerning with the information that is presented in support of an answer, and working to strict time limits are all important skills demanded by examinations. With

this in mind, our teachers place a great deal of emphasis on feedback to our students after the examinations have been corrected.

At the completion of the examination period, students will be asked to reflect on some important questions. For example, did they:

- understand what the questions were asking them to do?
- complete all parts of the examination in the allotted time?
- know enough information to successfully answer the questions?
- have the necessary skills to complete important tasks?
- manage stress levels so that you could think clearly?

Examinations in the earlier years actually improves student learning. While there is an important role to be played by project work that enables students to demonstrate their ability across a different range of skills and knowledge, examinations are extremely useful in testing a student's breadth of knowledge. Students have an opportunity in an examination to demonstrate what they know (key knowledge) and what they can do (key skills). Revision for examinations improves student learning by strengthening memory pathways to form deep long-term knowledge. Students are required to find meaning, answers and patterns of relevance. Examinations prepare our students for the reality of the VCE, they encourage students to reflect upon the skills and knowledge and they improve understanding across a breadth of knowledge.

Holistic Education

While examinations and assessment tasks are important, students are encouraged to strike a balance in order to take care of their health and well-being. Exercise, healthy eating, sleep and social connections with family and friends play a vital role;

indeed, these factors contribute to academic success. When students are happy they have the best chance of learning. The School offers a broad program to involve our students in the full life of the School beyond the regular classroom structure. These may include field trips, camps, lectures and classes during term breaks, classes before and after school hours, and lunchtime tutorials. It is a condition of enrolment that students attend these learning opportunities and fully commit to the School's program.

YEAR 8

Subjects

Art

This course enables students to gain practical skills in traditional art methods alongside contemporary art media. The course will focus on the exploration of ideas and experimentation. Students will develop confidence working with a range of art media including pencil, paint, cardboard and various other materials. Indigenous art styles where students learn and understand the links between culture and visual arts. Students will use 2D and 3D art techniques; these include drawing, painting and sculpture to complete their own unique works. Students will be introduced to major art works with an emphasis on those that have played a role in Art History.

Units of Study / Topics	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tonal Drawing• Exploration of art elements and principles• Investigation of traditional and contemporary Indigenous works• Stained glass windows	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drawing folio• Painting technique• Cutting skills• Understanding of the art elements• Development of ideas• Construction• Research task

YEAR 8

Subjects

Digital Technologies (DTE)

In Digital Technology, they learn to use a variety of DTE tools and techniques to assist with filtering, classifying, representing, describing, and organising ideas, concepts and issues. For example, a graphic / visual organisers such as an interaction outliner can be used to help structure thinking about the actions, reactions, and outcomes of two groups associated with an issue. Using software such as databases and spreadsheets enables the filtering and classifying of data and information to make more informed decisions.

In addition, students use DTE tools to retrace the decisions made and actions taken when learning and problem solving. By using a range of symbols, charts, images, sound and text, students can create a flow chart that maps their thinking processes and actions. Students reflect on the effectiveness of these saved thinking process maps and retrieve relevant ones to guide future applications. Students become efficient users of DTE for planning collaborative projects that involve creating information products and solving problems.

Students develop their knowledge about the characteristics of data by manipulating various data types, such as text, sound, numbers, and images, to create formatted information products such as Infographics and Dynamic Data Visualisations.

Units of Study / Topics	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Microsoft Office Suite – Advanced• Microcomputer hardware – Micro-bits• Programming and problem solving• Data analysis and visualisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Portfolio and online based• Team based tasks• Assignments and investigations• Tests and Quizzes

YEAR 8

Subjects

Drama

Students build upon the skills developed in Year 7. They continue to explore and develop their characterisation and improvisation skills through a variety of performance styles and genres. They will undertake an improvised satire performance, a scripted performance task, learn about genre and the Dramatic and Stagecraft elements integral to a performance.

Units of Study / Topics	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Characterisation• Dramatic elements and Production Areas• Narrative• Genre: Comedy, Melodrama and Soap Opera• Working with stimulus (text, photos, music)• Issue based drama• Improvised and scripted performances	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improvised performance• Scripted performance• Production Areas• Drama folio

YEAR 8

Subjects

English

In Year 8 students will learn to interpret language features, images and vocabulary used to represent the ideas and issues raised in a wide range of texts including a play, a novel, films, and media texts. They will read, listen to and view texts and develop an understanding of how events, situations and people can be represented from different viewpoints. Students will apply this knowledge to their own writing, creating structured and coherent texts for a range of purposes and audiences. This includes oral presentations, creative writing and analytical text responses. They develop their ability to listen for and explain different perspectives while expressing a point of view through discussion, presentations, theatrical performances and persuasive speeches.

Units of Study / Topics	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shakespeare!• Persuasive texts and oral presentation• Film study• Analysing a work of fiction• Reading for enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading comprehension tests• Grammar, spelling and language diagnostic tests• A piece of creative writing with an explanation• Dramatic performance• Film analysis• Analysis of persuasive media• Personal Reading Response

YEAR 8

Subjects

French

In learning a Language Other Than English students develop communication skills and knowledge, and come to understand social, historical, familial and other aspects of the specific language and culture of the speakers of the language they are studying. Language learning contributes to the development of inter-culturally aware citizens.

The course is structured around the knowledge, understandings and skills required to communicate in French, to be aware of language as a system and to gain cultural insights. Course content is centered on themes relating to everyday language use, covering topics relevant to the students' own language needs.

Units of Study / Topics	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily routines• Ordering food and school life• My home• Leisure activities• Places and directions• Shopping• Celebrations, holidays and weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular tests of speaking, listening, reading and writing to monitor student progress and thus influence style and pace of teaching• Completion of workbook exercises• Language-based projects• Participation in group and individual activities• Peer / self-assessment

Home Study

Students are expected to complete regular homework in French, including vocabulary revision on a daily basis.

Regular written homework will also be set by the teacher, and students are encouraged to access recommended internet websites to increase their understanding of the French language and awareness of French culture.

YEAR 8

Subjects

Humanities - Geography

In Year 8 Geography students will investigate two units of study: 'Landforms and Landscapes' and 'Changing Nations'. This is a semester based course.

Landforms and landscapes focuses on the processes that shape individual landforms, the values and meanings placed on landforms and landscapes by people, and hazards associated with landscapes. This unit focuses on tectonic movement and the hazards of earthquakes and volcanoes. Students will develop their understanding of this unit using studies drawn from Australia and around the world.

Changing Nations investigates the changing human geography of countries through a study of population distribution. Students will explore the economic, social and environmental causes of such changes. Through various case studies and analysis, students will consider the impact of urbanisation in Australia and compare this with other nations.

The key inquiry questions for Year 8 are:

- How do environmental and human processes affect the characteristics of places and environments?
- How do the interconnections between places, people and environments affect the lives of people?
- What are the consequences of changes to places and environments and how can these changes be managed?

Units of Study / Topics	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Landforms and landscapes• Changing nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research assignments• Mapping tasks• Class tests• Fieldwork• Data analysis• Note taking

YEAR 8

Subjects

Health and Physical Education

The Year 8 curriculum supports students to refine their knowledge and skills in relation to their health, safety and wellbeing, whilst further developing confidence and movement competences in a range of physical activity settings. They analyse how body control and coordination influence movement composition and performance. They learn to transfer skills across a variety of physical activities. Students explore the important role that games and sports, outdoor recreation, lifelong physical activities and rhythmic and expressive movement activities play in shaping cultures and identities. They also reflect on and refine personal and social skills as they participate in a range of activities.

Units of Study / Topics	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Food, nutrition and mental health• Alcohol and other drugs• Relationships and sexuality• Challenge and adventure activities• Games and sports• Lifelong physical activities• Rhythmic and expressive movement activities.• Swimming program and water safety activities (compulsory)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active participation in class activities• Motor skills and tactics• Fitness testing• Topic tests

Additional Information

Because of the school's firm belief in the importance of physical activity, students must participate in this subject. They will not be excused from this subject without a signed note from their parents which explains the nature of their illness. If a physical problem persists, the school will request a doctor's certificate. For many injuries, there is often a modified activity that students will be able to participate in to ensure they are gaining something meaningful from their time in the subject.

YEAR 8

Subjects

Humanities - History

In Year 8 History, students will explore history from the end of the ancient period to the beginning of the modern period. The study of this period requires students to analyse ways in which the modern world began to take shape through the contact of major civilisations with each other. During the semester, students will study a range of societies including Medieval Europe and Shogunate Japan, as well as exploring the impact of contact between the Spanish Conquistadors and the native population of South America. The content provides opportunities for students to develop historical understanding through key concepts.

The key enquiry questions for Year 8 History are:

- How did societies change from the end of the ancient period to the beginning of the modern age?
- What key beliefs and values emerged and how did they influence societies?
- What were the causes and effects of contact between societies in this period?
- Which significant people, groups and ideas from this period have influenced the world today?

Units of Study / Topics	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Europe and the Mediterranean World: Medieval Europe• The Asian Pacific World: Medieval Japan• Expanding Contacts: Discovery and Exploration: The Italian Renaissance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Source analysis• Research tasks• Timelines• Note taking• Mapping• Class tests

YEAR 8

Subjects

Mathematics

In Year 8 Mathematics, students build on prior learning while beginning to engage with more abstract ideas, using symbols and generalisations to represent concepts. They extend their skills and apply mathematical modelling to solve real-world and non-routine problems. Students draw on previously learned concepts in new combinations, developing more complex mathematical thinking while maintaining connections to practical applications. This deepens their understanding, fluency and confidence in using mathematics across a range of contexts.

Furthermore, the Victorian Mathematics curriculum develops students' key understandings by extending them across six strands. The aim of each strand is outlined below:

Number and Algebra:

The Number and Algebra strands develop students' skills in understanding and applying numbers, operations, symbols and relationships across a range of contexts, fostering capabilities essential for citizenship, work, financial literacy, lifelong learning and real-world problem-solving.

Measurement and Space:

The Measurement and Space strands develop students' ability to quantify, visualise, and work with aspects of size, shape, position and movement in natural and constructed worlds, supporting decision-making, problem-solving and applications.

Probability and Statistics:

The Probability and Statistics strands develop students' ability to collect, analyse, interpret and critically evaluate data and chance events, supporting informed decision-making, risk assessment and predictions across various fields.

Units of Study / Topics	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Algebra and index laws • Equations and inequalities • Fractions, percentages and decimals • Linear relationships • Measurement and Pythagoras' Theorem • Computation with integers • Ratios and rates • Angles, transformations and congruence • Statistics and probability • Algorithmic Thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic tests • Assignments/Projects • Problem-solving tasks

Additional Information

Students in Year 8 Mathematics are streamed into two levels – Advanced and Core.

Students in Year 7 Mathematics must achieve an average of 80% or higher to be eligible for Year 8 Advanced Mathematics the following year. To be guaranteed a place in Advance Mathematics, students need to be in the top 40% of their cohort.

YEAR 8

Subjects

Music

In Year 8 Music, students will learn practical skills in musical performance. They will perform music as individuals and as a group. The practical music skills relate to Keyboard/Piano, Guitar and Drumkit, but may also include vocals and other instruments in groups.

Students will express their creativity through composition tasks using an online computer creation platform.

The students' listening and analysis skills will be developed through a focus on the structure of Rock/Pop Music. They will also learn to perform a song in a group with other students from the class, developing musical skills, and skills in collaboration and communication.

Units of Study / Topics	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The structure of Rock Music and listening skills• Guitar performance• Keyboard/Piano Performance• Drumkit Performance• Group Performance• Musical composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individual Practical assessments• Group Practical Assessment• Composition• Listening and analysis

YEAR 8

Subjects

Product Design and Technology

In Year 8 the course focuses on the hand tools used in Technology. Students will learn correct use and safe handling. Particular attention will be given to the correct names of tools to familiarise students with the language of the subject.

The second focus is on developing skills in creating and making 3D projects. This will be done by visualisation drawings and use of computers. Students will be given a base design project and be expected to make changes to the appearance and construction method. The students use a range of materials: Wood, Metals and Plastics. They will examine the characteristics of these materials to determine the most appropriate to use.

The final section of the course involves self-evaluation of their work.

Units of Study / Topics	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investigation and design• Production and evaluation• Projects such as: plastic key-ring, sliding lidded box, puzzle maze and phone holder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theory component including a sketchbook containing research, a design brief, visualisation drawings and evaluation• Practical component including a number of small projects assessed on design and level of finish

YEAR 8

Subjects

Religious Education

In Year 8 Religious Education, students begin the year by studying characters and stories contained in the Old Testament. Then, they will study the New Testament, with a focus on key characters and significant events in the evolution of the church, including the Pentecost.

In the Stewardship unit, students explore the role of humanity in caring for the environment and inhabitants of the earth, researching on a topic of their choice and considering the actions required. This is linked to the students' understanding of Indigenous spirituality and the responsibility of First Nations people to care for Country.

Units of Study / Topics	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Old Testament• New Testament• Stewardship and Creation• Indigenous spirituality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• End of unit test• Creative analysis of a Bible story• Extended analytical responses

YEAR 8

Subjects

Science

In Year 8 Science, students continue to further develop their scientific understanding of the nature of science and skills that they have developed in Year 7. The Year 8 Science course is designed to consolidate students' general understanding in the following key areas of science:

- Biological Science
- Chemical Science
- Physical Science
- Earth and Space Sciences

During Year 8, students continue to develop their understanding of important science concepts across the major disciplines. Current scientific research and its human application is used to motivate and engage students to develop a richer understanding of how science can be enhanced. Students will work collaboratively to plan and conduct open investigations that will help to refine their science inquiry skills and further develop their quantitative inquiry skills. They will continue to identify and construct questions and problems that they can investigate scientifically and make predictions based on scientific knowledge. Students will learn to summarise data from different sources and construct representations of their data to reveal and analyse trends and patterns. In doing so, they will use appropriate scientific language to communicate science ideas, methods and findings.

Units of Study / Topics	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Energy, Light and Sound• Rocks• Cells, Organ Systems and Reproduction• Particles and Chemical Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Topic Tests and Examinations• Practical and Analytical Tasks• Assignments• Collaborative and Independent Research Investigations

Additional Information

Students will be given the opportunity to take part in various activities including excursions, incursions and nationally based competitions.

YEAR 8

Subjects

Visual Communication Design (VCD)

Students will learn to represent their designs in various drawing methods including freehand and instrumental drawings. They will understand how to use the design elements and principles to create successful layouts. Students will be able to create type designs which are suited for a specific purpose. They will be able to analyse and explain the purpose behind their own designs and those of other designers. They will understand the design fields. Students will be able to use digital media to refine their own drawn design concepts. Students will understand the design process and how to use it to present their own design concepts.

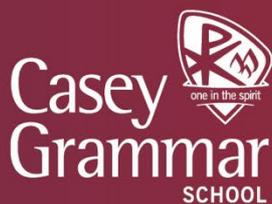
They will:

- Understand what design fields and their purpose in Visual Communication Design
- Use a range of media including paper, pencils and markers
- Improve their knowledge of Adobe Photoshop to make creative design solutions for their own visual communication
- Increase their understanding of design elements and be introduced to the design principles and identify where and why they have been used in visual communications
- Develop an understanding of drawing methods including paraline, perspective and orthogonal

Units of Study / Topics	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Pictograph using the design elements • Design a CD design and introduction to design principles • Instrumental drawing of industrial design product • Orthogonal drawing • Promotional poster 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freehand drawing skills • Instrumental drawing techniques • Use of media and digital media • Neatness and presentation • Critical analysis of design elements and principles • Knowledge of design terms • Development of ideas

Updated April 2025

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Bright minds, kind hearts.