



**RGS** ESTD  
1562  
HIGH WYCOMBE

# **Moving into Year 8**

## **2022/23**

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## Introduction

As a student goes through RGS, they follow three stages of educational studies. Years 7, 8 and 9 complete our Key Stage 3 courses. Many GCSE subjects now also begin preparation in Year 9. Years 10 and 11 are Key Stage 4 courses and lead to GCSE examination level. Finally, there is the two-year A level course in the Sixth Form.

As they are moving into Year 8 we thought it helpful to give you some general information about the next year.

Mr Carr will be their Head of Year for Years 8 and 9 and any information that current Year 7 Form Tutors and Head of Year have about them will be passed on to Mr Carr. It is our intention that they settle into their new classes as positively as possible.

We thought it helpful if you too were aware in advance of some Year 8 important information.

## Forms and Form Tutors

Students will remain in house form groups but be put in new classes and have a new Form Tutor at the beginning of Year 8. Inevitably, they will find that they are in classes with some students they do not know well, and we encourage them to take this opportunity to maintain Year 7 friendships but to also make new ones. The Year 8 Form Tutors, Head of Year and subject staff watch over this process carefully and take opportunities wherever possible to encourage these new friendships amongst the students. They will stay in the same form groups for Years 8 and 9 and it is our aim that they should also have the same Form Tutor and Head of Year for the two years.

## Form Tutors' Meetings

There will be a Virtual Form Tutor Meeting on Monday 14 November 2022, when you will have the opportunity to meet the Form Tutor and to discuss how your child has settled into Year 8. Of course, if you wish to contact the Form Tutor at any time, we recommend that you do this by email in the first instance. The Form Tutor will send a letter of introduction to you early in September.



## Parents' Meeting

There will be a Virtual Parents' Meeting for Year 8 on Wednesday 19 April 2022.

## Curriculum

In Year 8, students will continue with a similar curriculum to Year 7 except they will now add a second language or Classical Civilization. Students will be taught in groups based on their language options for most lessons but some practical subjects, which are taught in a rotation group, are taught in smaller groups. There is no setting in any subject in Year 8. The following is a summary of what is covered in each subject in Year 8.

### Art

**Landscape and the Built environment:** Students look at traditional and contemporary art works and architects inspired by landscape and the built environment. They develop a greater understanding of perspective and produce a series of personal and imaginative art works using a variety of 3D, photography, painting and printmaking techniques including re-designing and constructing a model for a new and improved school building.

**Art and Society:** Students look at the “human image” in society as an inspiration for art. There are individual and collaborative projects based on ancient and multi-cultural influences as a source for two-dimensional and three-dimensional art.

**Digging up the Past:** This is a collaborative project with the History Department. The students study structures and forms found in nature, focusing on how the geometry of natural growth can influence Art through direct observation and abstraction. They study and respond to the range of objects that are exhibited in The Pitt Rivers Museum and produce a variety of media responses, develop Graphic specific techniques, including typography, whilst improving and expanding upon a wide variety of practical skills informed by the formal elements.



## Biology

In Year 8, students complete KS3 by the end of the year. Topics that may be covered are:

- Fitness and Health (Diet, Heart and Circulation, Locomotion, Drugs and Alcohol)
- Food and Digestion
- Animal Reproduction
- Plants and Photosynthesis

## Chemistry

Building on the fundamentals covered in Year 7, Year 8 covers most of the remainder of 'Key Stage 3' Chemistry. The following topics will be studied:

- pH and indicators
- Acids, bases and neutralisation
- Patterns of reactivity – reactivity series, displacement reactions, metal extraction
- Fuels and global warming
- Rocks and environmental chemistry
- Useful chemistry e.g. advanced materials, voltaic cells

These are outlined in the [RGS Chemistry specification](#) introduced in Year 7.

## Classical Civilisation

Students will study various aspects of ancient culture and history. Among the topics usually studied are: Minoan and Mycenaean culture, Greek theatre and drama including comedy and tragedy, the birth of democracy, Greek mythology and the world of heroes, Greek religion, ancient art and language. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to be creative and to express their own opinions. The wide range of topics means there is something to suit all interests and learning styles.



## Computing

The course builds on from the foundations started in Year 7. They start the year learning in part what is a computer is and how computers operate on a low-level using assembly language and the Littleman Computer simulation. The course then introduces them to computational thinking where they develop applications and solve problems using flowagrithm and Building your own Blocks as a stepping-stone to learning text-based programming languages in Year 9. The students then use the Game maker software to develop a games application using the Game maker scripting language.

## Design and Technology

### **Snapper (litter picker)**

Students learn how basic mechanisms such as levers and linkages are able to reduce the effort needed to move loads and how types of movement may be changed from input to output. The module teaches students how anthropometric data is used in developing sizes and how ergonomic considerations improve the safety and function of products. Students further develop their manufacturing skills, this time working with manufactured boards and polymers. Finished products are tested and evaluated with user opinion to determine further modifications.

### **Night Light**

Continuing from the earlier basic electronics work, covered in the Eco Lamp, students learn how light sensor circuits work using a light dependent resistor (LDR), variable resistor and a transistor, as well as other more familiar components such as LEDs. The module also involves plastic forming processes to make the circuit housing including finishing acrylic, vacuum forming HIPs and chemical welding polymers together. The module also involves CAD/CAM where (some but not all / where time permits) students laser cut a child-friendly design feature that forms part of the finished product.



## Drama

The Drama module in Year 8 consists of improving group skills: communication, confidence and vocal expression, as well as learning lines and Drama terminology. The students also look at whole group performance, scripted plays and the performance of Shakespeare.

## English

In Year 8, students continue to develop their understanding of English Literature through an exploration of novels, poetry and Shakespeare. The course aims to build on existing skills, helping students to develop their essay structures, and weaving in key contextual elements in line with the GCSE curriculum that they are building towards.

They begin the course by developing their creative writing through the 'Poetry about Identity: Finding a Voice' unit, enabling them to explore key poetic forms and devices in an insightful and imaginative way.

In their exploration of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, students encounter challenging themes of love, fate and family honour, as well as studying complex Shakespearean features such as iambic pentameter, building a firm foundation for their studies of Shakespeare in their later years.

The Year 8 end of year exam is a passage-based Literature essay based on the students' study of *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck; this essay requires close-reading analytical skill as well as the application of key contextual ideas to the analysis of the passage – both crucial skills at GCSE. Students continue with a weekly Library lesson throughout the year and are expected to read at least six books in each term, completing Accelerated Reader quizzes as they did in Year 7. We, as a department, are always grateful for your support with regard to reading at home. We encourage all students to read independently every day – it should be part of their daily routine. They should discuss their reading with their teachers and the school librarian, seeking help in selecting books that will inspire them.



## French

We continue to build on the grammar covered in Year 7 and introduce two new tenses to enable students to talk in the future and the past. In year 8 students also cover all four language skills (reading, listening, writing and speaking) and develop their translating skills as well.

The topics covered include:

- In town: shops, shopping for food, quantities
- Making plans: countries, transport, holiday activities, home town, and region
- Daily life: school, subjects, likes and dislikes, daily routine
- Family life: family, descriptions, staying with a French family, introduction to talking about the past
- Cafes and restaurants: ordering food, drink, ice creams, describing recent meals
- Travel: travelling by train and plane, describing a recent journey
- Health: clothes, appearance, parts of the body, illnesses

## German

In Year 8, Students practise the four main skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening in equal measure. The topics covered include school life, home life, food and drink, family, leisure activities, the town, numbers and dates. We place great emphasis on teaching our pupils to communicate in German, to give opinions and justify their answers. The present and future tense is covered, and we concentrate on word order in sentences and adjectival endings. Even at this early stage, all reading and listening comprehensions are designed to prepare the students for GCSE questions. Furthermore, we encourage students to use IT to enhance their use of the language.





## Geography

In Year 8, we will be exploring the Key Skills of description, explanation and assessment through places across the world.

First is the “**Hydrological Cycle**” topic where we explore the water cycle on a local scale. We look into the classic formations of a river, and how flooding may impact us in the UK. Through recent events and research, we assess how and why some areas have been hit particularly hard by storms.

“**Energy Issues**” encompasses the creation and use of fossil fuels and renewable energy in the world. We research energy within the UK and the impact it is having on our environment and economy.

Next, we look in to “**Population Issues**” which lets us explore how areas are experiencing population growth at different rates. We look in to why this is happening and explore why migration patterns exist.

Next, we explore one of David Attenborough’s favourite environments, the “**Oceans**”. In this topic, we discuss plastics and how they impact coral reefs. We look at how human activity is damaging, and also trying to save our natural habitats.

Finally, we look at the “**Amazon Rainforest**”, learning about the flora and fauna in the area and how they are impacted by activities such as gold mining and deforestation. Some very interesting assessment of how necessary these activities taking place are, and discussion surrounding how best to tackle the issues.

## History

Year 8 History begins in the turbulent world of the late medieval England, when Richard III seized the throne and became one of the most vilified kings in our history. The curriculum then then explores aspects of the Tudor Dynasty, including the driving force of religion in bringing about change. Students will also decide whether Queen Elizabeth I deserved her magnificent reputation. The focus then moves to Britain’s



role in the Atlantic Slave Trade and the year finishes by looking at who should be considered Britain's greatest democratic hero.

## Latin

In Year 8, students continue their studies using the Suburani course. They will build on their understanding of vocabulary and grammar; key linguistic features that will be studied are: the forms of verbs including present and past tenses, nouns and adjectives. The primary aim is an ability to comprehend and translate passages in Latin of increasing complexity. The Suburani course develops and practises pupils' ability to translate stories while also covering various aspects of Roman life and culture such as chariot racing, mythological tales and beliefs, the public baths, religion, slavery, etc.

## Mathematics

The course builds on the Year 7 syllabus and extends into National Curriculum material, Grade 7 and beyond. Topics include:

- Number: all four operations on negative numbers, powers and roots, fractions and decimals, percentages, prime factors, HCF, LCM, rounding and standard form, sequences, proportion and ratio.
- Algebra: expanding brackets, factorisation, solving linear equations, constructing linear equations, substituting into expressions, trial and improvement, gradient of a straight line, real-life graphs, changing the subject, quadratics, linear simultaneous equations and sequences.
- Shape, Space and Measure: angles in parallel lines, angles of polygons, quadrilaterals, area and circumference of a circle, surface area and volume of prisms, nets, imperial units, congruent shapes, transformations including fractional and negative scale factors, map scales and scale drawings, construction and loci, trigonometry, surface area and volume.
- Handling Data: probability, mutually exclusive events, scatter diagrams, interpreting graphs and diagrams, collecting and comparing data, grouped data, grouped frequency tables.



- The Collins Maths Frameworking textbook (Book 2.3) is available on-line through Collins Connect. The outline Scheme of Work is on Teams and Sharepoint. Students are directed to online resources for homework tasks throughout the year and will become familiarised with various online platforms, and also as they prepare for the end of year examinations.

## Music

During Year 8 Music lessons, students naturally continue building on the skills and theoretical knowledge built in Year 7, whilst continuing to develop a love for music-making and a more nuanced sense of musicality, where genres are seen in context.

In Year 7, they finished third term learning chords, songs and TAB melodies on a 4-stringed ukulele. In the first module, this is now extended to a 6-stringed guitar. Here, they continue to learn basic skills, TAB reading (including chords and riffs). Similarly, they continue to develop proficiency on keyboard and additionally learn new improvisation skills based on scales. Performance tasks are delivered in a variety of ways, with students completing solo, paired and group tasks (including the use of the practice room corridor where appropriate for breakout tasks).

Music Technology starts to feature more with composition tasks delivered via Garageband on iPads (including sequencing, editing and layering work appropriately). These skills are explored via a wide variety of musical genres such as: Blues and Jazz, Folk Music, Japanese traditional music and Reggae.

## Physical Education

Across all Physical Education curriculums, we have an ambitious, stimulating and challenging vision to deliver a high quality and inclusive programme. Our Departmental aim is to provide all students with a high sense of self-worth and inspire all students to contribute positively to society. We want our students to have developed the confidence and competence with their skills and knowledge and take personal responsibility for their lifelong engagement in healthy and physically active lifestyle.



All great journeys start with the ‘*End in Mind*’. This means that we establish a clear vision with our students on where they want to get to with Physical Education and we set about supporting them to achieve that vision by teaching the desired skills and knowledge from the very start of the RGSHW journey. We adopt a variety of activities to provide a broad and balanced experience that is tailored to the individual needs of each student within a safe, inspiring and inclusive environment. This allows all students to regularly learn the ‘*End in Mind*’ skills and knowledge and maximise their development and enjoyment within Physical Education. Our Athletic Development Coaches provide further support throughout this process as additional members of staff in lessons.

<p><b>‘End in Mind’ – Skills Knowledge</b>  <i>A skill is a complex performance – drawing on what is known</i></p>				
<b>The RGSHW Way</b>	<b>Health and Well being</b>	<b>Athletic Development</b>	<b>Beat the Game</b>	<b>Actions</b>
Resilient	Sleep	Energy System	Individually	Strike
Grounded	Nutrition	Foundational Movement	Collaboratively	Throw
Selfless	Mindset	Creative movement	Rules	Receive
Honest	Social	Power Production	Tactical principles	Kick
Work Ethic	Exercise	Speed of Movement	Additional roles	Carry

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Examples and Adapted Versions</b>
Invasion games	Handball, Aussie Rules, Basketball, Rugby, Hockey
Net Games	Badminton, Volleyball, Tennis, Table Tennis
Target Games	Dodgeball and Derivatives



Athletic Development	Energy Systems, Foundational Movement, Creative Movement, Power Production, Speed of Movement
Gymnastics	Isometric Holds, Rolls, Rotations, Parkour
Athletics	Track and Field – Traditional and Creative Methods
Strike and Field	Softball, Rounders, Cricket
Outdoor Adventure	Capture the Flag, Orienteering, Team Challenges

## Physics

The students study the following topics:

### Light:

- Drawing ray diagrams to show how light travels
- Law of reflection
- Describing and explaining refraction
- How colours mix, how filters work and how we see coloured objects

### Energy Transfers:

- Energy types and transfers
- Conservation of Energy
- Methods of heat transfer
- Particle model

### Circuits and Potential Difference:

- Definition of voltage
- Energy changes in circuits
- Rules to work out voltage in series and parallel circuits
- Connecting circuits to measure voltage



## **Pressure:**

- What is meant by pressure?
- Calculations involving force, pressure and area
- Pressure in liquids and gases
- High and low pressure applications

## **Magnetism:**

- What a magnet is and how it behaves
- How to make a magnet
- The properties of magnetic fields
- Properties and uses of electromagnets

## **PSHCE**

In PSHCE, Year 8 students cover three areas which are: Health and Well-being, The Wider World, and Relationships and Sex Education. The aim in PSHCE is to create a safe environment where students can share ideas and have their questions answered so that they can be both physically and emotionally prepared for the world.

These units include work and discussions on:

### **Health and Well-being**

- Becoming an adult
- Your rights and the rights of your parents and carers
- Recreational drugs and addiction to prescribed medicine
- Smoking and alcohol
- Mental health and well-being
- Stress management
- Resilience including anger management, jealousy/fear
- Optional unit on risk taking behaviour including piercing and tattoos

### **Wider World**

- Introduction to politics



- British moral values with a focus on prejudice
- Blood donation: Why do people give blood?
- Organ donation and assumed consent
- Stem cell transplantation
- Remembrance

## RSE\*

- Different types of relationship
- Parents and family
- Close relationships and sexual preference
- Contraception
- STIs and health clinics
- Sexting and the law
- Respect and consent in sexual relationships
- Trust and commitment
- Abusive relationships

\*Statutory from September 2020, planned in accordance with Government guidelines, the PSHE Association and OFSTED requirements.

Further to this, we also provide a 12-week course on mindfulness training

## Mindfulness

This exciting initiative will be taught once a week as part of a 10-week classroom-based curriculum called **.b** (pronounced 'dot-be'). Mindfulness involves training our attention to experience the present moment with greater curiosity and kindness. This helps us both to appreciate what is going well and to respond more skillfully to life's inevitable challenges.

You may have heard of mindfulness or read some of the recent media coverage about it. A great deal of this media interest has arisen as a result of the growing body of rigorous research evidence regarding the potential benefits of mindfulness for young people. These include randomised control trials and neuroscientific studies.

As Professor Katherine We are observed in her award-winning research summary: *Evidence for the Impact of Mindfulness on Children and Young People*, schools who engage in mindfulness are likely to see '**beneficial results on the emotional wellbeing, mental health, ability to learn and even the physical health of their students.**'



At its most simple **.b** is an awareness-raising exercise to give all students a taste of mindfulness so that they know about it and can return to it later in life if they choose to do so.

**.b** aims to help young people:

- Improve their concentration and focus, in classes, in exams and tests, on the sports field, when playing games, when paying attention and listening to others.
- Fulfil their potential and pursue their own goals e.g. be more creative, more relaxed, both academically and personally.
- Experience greater well-being (e.g. feel happier, calmer, more fulfilled).
- Work with difficult mental states such as anxious thoughts and low moods.
- Cope with the everyday stresses and strains of adolescent life such as exams, relationships, sleep problems, family issues.

The feedback from students who take part in **.b** is very positive. Please follow the link to the [testimonials](#) page of the Mindfulness in Schools Project website where you can hear students speaking movingly about their experiences in developing mindfulness skills having taken part in the **.b** programme.

Should you be interested in reading further about the body of research evidence around the potential benefits of mindfulness for young people, please look at the following document by Professor Katherine We are:

<http://mindfulnessinschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/MiSP-Research-Summary-2012.pdf>

Further research studies regarding the benefits of mindfulness for young people can be found on the Mindfulness in Schools Project Website: [mindfulnessinschools.org](http://mindfulnessinschools.org) - [Research](#)

## Religious Studies

RS lessons will focus on the Philosophy of Religion. We will begin with a unit of study on the Existence of God, including an exploration of what we mean by 'God'. We will





then think about whether there can be a life after death, the Problem of Evil and Science and Religion. Students will develop analytical skills and learn how to ask questions in a way that builds or challenges philosophical arguments.

## Spanish

In Year 8, students practise the four main skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening in equal measure. The topics covered include family, hobbies, food and drink, places in town and school life. We place great emphasis on teaching the pupils to communicate in Spanish as much as possible, allowing them to express their opinion on a variety of topics. The present and future tense is covered, and we concentrate on word order in sentences along with adjectival agreements. Even at this early stage, the activities practised are reflected in those required at GCSE. Furthermore, we encourage use of IT to enhance their learning of the language. A large aspect of learning Spanish also involves learning about the Hispanic cultures and students will have the opportunity to delve deeper into the widely varied and unique customs and celebrations of Spanish-speaking countries.

## Co-Curricular Education

Character education forms an integral part of life at RGSHW and our Co-Curricular goal is to support students in learning to understand the importance of teamwork, resilience, community & leadership as well as the value of your physical and emotional wellbeing.

We want to ensure that all students can access and take part academic activities outside of the normal timetabled day, through our numerous clubs and societies as well as being inspired by to take part in are considerable number of offsite opportunities and trips

Educational & Development trips, Clubs and Co-curricular activities are displayed on our school website and on the notice board in the Main Corridor to the right of room 22. We update this information regularly and we invite you to check both throughout the year. All Co-Curricular information is also sent home as a collective document at



the start of the year to assist planning. The RGS is an exceptional school, in large part due to the effort that is made to offer a wide variety of trips, clubs and co-curricular activities, and we strongly encourage you to participate in these as much as you can. If you have any questions, please contact Mr Clatworthy on [dec@rgshw.com](mailto:dec@rgshw.com) (my door is also always open to students so please stop by).

Finally, we hope this information has been helpful to you and we wish you and your child, a very relaxing and enjoyable summer. School resumes for Year 8 students on Tuesday 6 September at 8.40am.

**Mr N Carr**  
**Head of Year 8**  
**(2022/2023)**

