

Curriculum Update Autumn 1

Welcome back to a brand-new school year. We hope you and your families had a restful summer and that students are feeling refreshed and ready for the challenges and opportunities ahead.

During the summer term, our staff spent a great deal of time reviewing and refining the curriculum. Teachers carefully looked at their schemes of learning, updated teaching materials, and made thoughtful adaptations to ensure that lessons this year are as ambitious, engaging and supportive as possible. This work means we are beginning the autumn term with a curriculum that has been strengthened and fine-tuned, ready to give students the very best learning experience.



Work Hard



Be Kind



Join In

This year we will be focussing on how we use assessments at TCS. Assessments are not just about measuring outcomes – they help teachers identify what students know, highlight where there may be knowledge gaps, and guide the next steps in planning. By using assessment information effectively, we can ensure that students are supported and challenged in the right ways, enabling them to make strong progress.

We are also offering additional support sessions this year for students in Years 7, 8 and 9. These small-group sessions, which will take place during form time, will focus on English, Maths and Science – core subjects that underpin much of the curriculum. They are designed to help close knowledge gaps and give students extra confidence. Where we feel a student would particularly benefit, we will write home with more information.

This year also sees the launch of our **Foundations of Excellence** – a set of key aspects of our teaching and learning strategy that will underpin all lessons. These foundations will ensure every child experiences high-quality learning every day and will also form part of a revised quality assurance system that allows us to monitor and support classroom practice. Our Year 7 students will get to know these routines through the **Year 7 Olympics**, a fun competition where form groups practise and perfect the foundations. This will be a great opportunity for them to show our key school value: *join in*.

Building on student voice work from last year, we are developing our approach to feedback even further. All students will now have the chance to give feedback on their lessons once a term via a quick online questionnaire. This will allow us to hear from every student, every term, and use their views to shape curriculum and teaching decisions. We will also share key findings with parents so that you can see how students' voices are helping to shape their school experience.

If you would like to find out more about the curriculum for any of our subjects, please visit our website <https://www.teignmouthsecondary.co.uk/the-tcs-curriculum/>

We have been working hard on mapping our **Year 7** curriculum so that you have a better understanding of what students will be learning each half term. Have a look at what is coming up in the next few months.

PSHE Lessons	Assemblies	Events	Careers
•Thriving In Secondary School •Goal Setting •Friendship and Empathy	•Making a successful transition: routines and expectations, nerves are normal, where to get help.... •Celebrating difference: LGBT & Black history month, adoption week (October)	•Extracurricular programme launched •Safer places safer spaces creative workshop •Launch of Student Voice •Charity committee cake bake sale •Student voice and charity Committee reward trip – Paignton Zoo •Netball South Devon tournaments	

	Subject	Unit of Work
Year 7 Autumn 1	English	Unit of Work: Overcoming the Monster Why are we learning this? Year 7 begins with a review and revision of writing skills acquired in KS2, allowing teachers to appropriately benchmark prior learning, identify areas of strength and weakness and adapt teaching accordingly. Significant time is spent on the review of grammar and sentence construction at this stage to provide a strong foundation for future learning. Greek myths are amongst the texts we use to also explore narrative structure.
	Maths	Unit of Work: Number sense and calculations, Expressions and equations, Measures Why are we learning this? Basic numeracy, algebraic concepts and units of measure are the fundamental building blocks for every topic students will study over the next 5 years. It is vital this is covered first in year 7 and the entire Autumn term is dedicated to securing these ideas, which underpin all others.
	Science	Unit of Work: Energy and the particle model Why are we learning this? The concept of energy emerged in the 19th century. The idea was used to explain the work output of steam engines and then generalised to understand other heat engines. Energy is now recognised as a key principle in physics which underpins many scientific concepts.
	History	Unit of Work: What are the skills needed to be a good historian? Why are we learning this? Students all have differing starting points, and this unit provides an opportunity to further refine and develop the skills needed to be an effective historian. Time will be spent looking at a range of skills from inference to source utility, providing a strong foundation for their learning journey.
	Geography	Unit of Work: Becoming a geographer: What are the skills we need? Why are we learning this? Students all have differing starting points, and this unit provides an opportunity to review the key skills that required to be a successful geographer. Time will be spent looking a range of cartographic skills enabling students to read and interpret maps, apply skills and undertake fieldwork on the school site, providing a strong foundation for their learning journey.

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Subject	Unit of Work			
MFL	Unit of Work: All about me (present tense) Why are we learning this? Right from the start, we aim to enthuse our language learners giving them the opportunity to leave the first lessons with a sense of achievement, whatever their previous experience with languages. Our first term topic of introducing and talking about yourself, using a set of phrase which students want to use in real-life situation makes them realise that this is more than a classroom exercise, it is a living language spoken by them and another opportunity to get to know each other better.			
PE	Unit of Work: Developing skills and techniques Fundamental Motor Skills, Dance, Rugby, Netball Why are we studying this? In the Autumn term boys will study Rugby, Table Tennis and Dance. In these sports students will learn the skills required to apply in game situations and use un extra-curricular clubs and school fixtures. In the Autumn term girls will study Netball, Rugby and Dance. In these sports students will learn the skills required to apply in game situations and use un extra-curricular clubs and school fixtures. As well as learning the skills for their sports all students will develop their physical literacy understanding about the components of fitness.			
Art	Unit of Work: Name Plate (typography) Why are we learning this? An introduction to the fundamentals of Art and applying them in a graphics themed introductory project.			
DT	Unit of Work: Either Food Module: Healthy eating; Design Technology: Making a torch and making a mechanical toy Why are we studying this? Students rotate around a range of modules in Technology spending a term in the Food area learning about the basics of healthy eating whilst learning to combine ingredients for a range of dishes using the rubbing in method. In the other areas of technology students are learning about basic electronics and computer aided design as well as learning about basic hand tools and safety as these skills all form a foundation of knowledge that builds from KS2.			
IT	Unit of Work: Clear messaging in digital media (7.1) Year 7 students will be developing digital literacy skills that they will need throughout their time at school. They will gain an understanding of common productivity software, exploring the importance of colour, imagery and language in developing coherent digital artifacts that support a cause.			
Drama	Unit of Work: Essential Drama Skills Why are we learning this? This introductory unit aims to familiarise students with the rules and expectations of the Drama Department while fostering a collaborative and supportive classroom environment. Through engaging group exercises, students will bond with their peers and develop essential teamwork skills. They will be introduced to key explorative strategies such as still image and narration, which lays the groundwork for more advanced theatrical techniques in future studies. By the end of this unit, students will have a strong foundation in basic drama techniques and the confidence to express themselves creatively in a group setting. This experience will prepare them for more complex dramatic work in subsequent years.			
Music	Unit of Work: Medieval Music, Foundation performance skills Why are we learning this? By studying medieval music, students develop an appreciation for the origins and evolution of western music. Students will learn what the finger system for piano is and how to apply it to performance, basic stave notation and how to read it, how to rehearse successfully and how to identify key features of a piece of music. Students will enhance their listening and analytical skills, and gain insights into the cultural and social influences that shaped music during this period.			
EPR	Unit of Work: What is RE? Why are we learning this? Students all have differing starting points, and this unit provides an opportunity to examine what the study of RE involves and the main worldviews so that they can develop the skills needed to be an effective philosopher, providing a strong foundation for their learning journey.			

We have been working hard on mapping our **Year 8** curriculum so that you have a better understanding of what students will be learning each half term. Have a look at what is coming up in the next few months.

PSHE Lessons	Assemblies	Events	Careers
- What is Democracy? - Governments and Voting - Political Parties	- The Best Version of You: Our values - Celebrating difference: LGBT & Black history month, adoption week (October)	- KS3 Student voice and charity committee selection - Extracurricular programme launched - Safer places safer spaces creative workshop - Charity committee cake bake sale - Student voice and charity Committee reward trip - Netball South Devon tournaments	

	Subject	Unit of Work
Year 8 Autumn 1	English	Unit of Work: London through Time Why are we learning this? This scheme of learning is designed to give students a firm grounding in literary analysis as well as some cultural capital relating to the treatment of the poor (and specifically children) in the 18th & 19th Centuries. This scheme builds on the core comprehension and analysis skills developed in Year 7 and prepares students for studying texts from different perspectives as they continue in year 8 (most notably the study of <i>Animal Farm</i>).
	Maths	Unit of Work: Percentages, Money, Indices, Equations, Sequences, Ratio Why are we learning this? In Year 7, a large proportion of teaching time was dedicated towards numeracy and basic algebraic concepts. This knowledge is now ready to be built upon at the start of year 8. Students have the necessary skills needed to tackle percentages with/without a calculator and build upon their algebraic knowledge tackling index rules, solving increasingly more challenging equations and using algebra to describe sequences.
	Science	Unit of Work: Density, Acids and Alkalis and Cell Transport Why are we learning this? Students learn about acids and alkalis to understand chemical reactions, pH levels, and the properties of substances, which are crucial for everyday applications like cooking, cleaning, and medicine, as well as industrial processes. They study density to grasp why objects float or sink, how substances interact, and the properties of materials, aiding in understanding buoyancy and pressure. Additionally, students learn about cell transport to understand how cells move nutrients, gases, and waste, which is essential for bodily functions.
	History	Unit of Work: Why did the civil war happen, and what were the consequences? Why are we learning this? This unit enables students to continue with their chronological journey through time, providing opportunities to embed the skills learnt in year 7. Underpinned by causation and consequence, students apply this to the English Civil War and examine to role of Cromwell and his leadership. This unit provides the foundations to access the rest of year through understanding the changing role of society and increased calls for democracy.
	Geography	Unit of Work: What is development? Why are we learning this? This unit provides an opportunity for students to develop a good understanding of development. Underpinned by the book ‘Factfulness’ this unit provides the opportunity to explore how and why development differs globally, enabling students to gain an understanding of how development is measured, critically evaluating the strengths and limitations of each indicator. Students will then go on to explore the dangers of ‘a single story’, applying this to place. This unit provides the foundations to access the rest of year 8 where we exploring the development of global cities and apply our knowledge to the study of Brazil

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MFL	Unit of Work: Media around me Why are we learning this? In this unit, students will learn appropriate vocabulary to talk about their free time and their use of technology and discuss TV preferences. Throughout this unit, students will be developing their confidence in communicating their likes and dislikes and understanding main points in written and spoken texts on media and technology.			
Art	Unit of Work: Pop Art (Food) Why are we learning this? To reinforce the unit of work from Year 7 revolving around colour theory and introducing vital knowledge of key art movements and contemporary artists, leading to new application of materials.			
IT	Unit of Work: Year 8 students will be learning about how computing systems operate, from operating systems and programs to the physical components that store and execute these programs. Students will also get the opportunity to consider the future of computing from quantum computing to artificial intelligence			
Drama	Unit of Work: Page to Stage Why are we learning this?: Learning "page to stage" is crucial for drama students as it bridges the gap between reading a script and bringing it to life on stage, developing essential skills like character analysis, directorial vision, and collaborative teamwork. This process encourages students to understand the given circumstances of a play text, explore diverse theatrical styles, and translate written words into compelling performances.			
Music	Unit of Work: Hooks and Riffs; Developing performance skills through popular music Why are we learning this? By studying hooks and riffs, students will explore key components that make popular music memorable and engaging. Students will learn advanced techniques for playing these catchy musical phrases on various instruments, focusing on improving their timing, coordination, and expression. They will further develop their understanding of musical structure and how hooks and riffs contribute to a song's identity. Through this unit, students will enhance their performance skills, gain confidence in playing popular music, and appreciate the cultural significance and impact of these elements in contemporary music.			
Design and Tech	Unit of Work: Food Module: Computer Aided Design and Programming module: Windmills with an engineering and sustainable energy focus. Why are they studying this? In the food rotation, students are developing more complex skills by making bread doughs and pasta from scratch. They also learn about macro and micro-nutrients needed for a healthy diet. In the other rotations students build on their computer aided design skills and then 3d print their own phone stand. Students will also develop their knowledge of micro controllers resulting in a group design for a charitable product. More complex skills in engineering are also taught looking at using bearings, understanding material properties and creating screw threads for a windmill project. These skills all form a foundation of knowledge for KS4 as well as life skills.			
EPR	Unit of Work: How can the Sikh way of life help us to become more selfless? Why are we learning this? This unit of learning provides students with the opportunity to explore one of the major world religions. Through exploring the importance of key beliefs through interpreting the Mool Mantra, and examining the origins of Sikhism, students will have the opportunity to discuss religious freedom and what is really means to be 'selfless'.			
PE	Unit of Work: Performing in competitive situations and developing strategies Table Tennis; Rugby; Netball, Fitness Why are we learning this? In the Autumn term boys will study Rugby, Table Tennis and Fitness. In these sports students will develop the skills and strategies required to effectively apply in game situations and use un extra-curricular clubs and school fixtures. In the Autumn term girls will study Netball, Rugby and Fitness. In these sports students will develop the skills and strategies required to effectively apply in game situations and use un extra-curricular clubs and school fixtures. All students will follow a block of fitness and will understand how to effectively use the fitness suite and develop their physical literacy understanding about fitness training for their sport and individual needs.			

We have been working hard on mapping our **Year 9** curriculum so that you have a better understanding of what students will be learning each half term. Have a look at what is coming up in the next few months.

PSHE Lessons	Assemblies	Events	Careers
- Personal goals and aspirations - Career Pilot - GCSE options process	- The Best Version of You: Our values - Celebrating difference: LGBT & Black history month, adoption week (October)	- KS3 Student voice and charity committee selection - Extracurricular programme launched - Safer places safer spaces creative workshop - Charity committee cake bake sale - Netball South Devon tournaments	Devon Partnership Trust Careers Workshops

	Subject	Unit of Work
Year 9 Autumn 1	English	Unit of Work: Romeo & Juliet Why are we learning this? This scheme of learning is designed to give students a firm grounding in literary analysis as well as cultural capital relating to the work of Shakespeare. This text builds on work completed earlier in the curriculum as well as preparing students for the style of analysis required at KS4.
	Maths	Unit of Work: Fractions and percentages, Probability, Standard form, Inequalities, Quadratic equations ,Formulae, Constructions, Circles Why are we learning this? A students' overall mathematical toolbox is strengthened during years 7 and 8 to a point which now enables them to extent their current understanding . Algebraic concepts are now taken to new heights with inequalities and higher degree equations. Shape and space work encompasses both accurate constructions as well as introducing a new building block of work with circles needed for higher level concepts in future years.
	Science	Unit of Work: Energy and the particle model Why are we learning this? The concept of energy emerged in the 19th century. The idea was used to explain the work output of steam engines and then generalised to understand other heat engines. Energy is now recognised as a key principle in physics which underpins many scientific concepts.
	History	Unit of Work: WWII Why are we learning this? This unit enables students to continue with their chronological journey through time, providing opportunities to embed the skills learnt in year 7 and 8. Students study the causes of World War Two before looking at the evolving use of technology in warfare and the role of ordinary people in various roles during the war. This unit provides the foundations for the further study of Weimar and Nazi Germany at GCSE.
	Geography	Unit of Work: Why is our earth so hazardous? Why are we learning this? A unit whereby students will explore the key concepts and processes behind plate tectonics. Through this unit, students will have the opportunity to explore the theory of plate tectonics and explore the associated impacts of volcanoes. Through studying a variety of differing examples, students will discover how level of development influences the impacts, responses and mitigation strategies adopted by different countries. This unt provides the foundations for the study of Natural Hazards at GCSE.



	Unit of Work
MFL	Unit of Work: Celebrity culture Why are we learning this? As this topic links with the topic of 'Family' covered in Y7, students will be encouraged to use and expand their vocabulary and grammar previously studied to describe their favourite celebrity. Additionally, students will learn how to use the Conditional tense to talk about hypothetical situations. This topic is not only pertinent to their world not only got relevance through its content, but it is also a theme of the new GCSE specification.
Art	Unit of Work: African Masks Why are we learning this? Reinforcing key formal elements of Art within a new cultural art setting and introducing new materials such as ceramics.
IT	Unit of Work: Year 9 students will be exploring artificial intelligence. They will develop an understanding of the different types of AI, how AI systems work and the issues and considerations that need to be made when using AI. Students will get opportunity to develop their skills in developing prompts to make AI output more relevant in addition to exploring future AI-related careers.
Drama	Unit of Work: Genres and Styles Why are we learning this? Learning different genres and styles of theatre broadens drama students' understanding of the art form, allowing them to analyse, interpret, and perform a wider range of theatrical works. This knowledge also enhances their creativity, communication skills, and ability to work collaboratively. Furthermore, exposure to diverse theatrical styles can deepen their appreciation for theatre as an art form and its impact on society.
Music	Unit of Work: Film and Media; Refining knowledge of performance through film and media music Why are we learning this? By studying film and media music, students will delve into the powerful role music plays in enhancing visual storytelling. Students will refine their performance skills by learning to play iconic themes and motifs from various films and media. They will also develop their composition skills by creating their own music to accompany visual media, considering elements such as mood, atmosphere, and character. This unit will deepen students' understanding of how music can influence emotions and narrative, improve their technical abilities on their chosen instruments, and foster creativity in composing original pieces.
DT	Unit of work: Students rotate around one Technology area per term: Food Module: Engineering module– manufacturing a screw- driver and casting; Timber module:- creating a wooden bird feeder Why are they studying this? This year forms the foundation of knowledge of KS4: In Food students recap on dietary needs and food hygiene whilst gaining knowledge in sustainable foods and making their own choices based on factors like allergens, availability, food miles and health. Students cook more complex dishes based on the rubbing in and dough methods previously learnt. Engineering students operate the lathe and heat treat metal in order to manufacture a screwdriver from a drawing, they learn about accuracy and working independently to use machinery. In DT Timbers students build on their computer aided design knowledge as well as the skills they have previously developed using hand tools to create a wooden bird feeder based on the Art Deco period. These are all skills needed for KS4 that build directly on the foundation of skills taught in Year 7 and Year 8. The skills and knowledge base also give skills for life.
EPR	Unit of Work: What big questions can I ask in Philosophy? Why are we learning this? This unit provides and introduction to philosophy giving students the opportunity to explore different philosophers and thought-provoking questions that have been central to philosophical inquiry throughout history. This unit provides the opportunity to further develop skills in analysis and critical thinking, providing the foundations to examine key philosophical questions throughout year.
PE	Unit of Work: Developing as sports performers and leaders Fitness; Rugby; Netball / Basketball, Table tennis Why are we learning this? In the Autumn term boys will study Rugby, Table Tennis and Fitness. In the Autumn term girls will study Netball, Rugby, Dance and Fitness. In these sports students will develop advanced skills and strategies required to be effectively performers in competitive situations and develop leadership skills. All students will follow a block of fitness and will understand how to effectively train and develop their physical literacy understanding about fitness training for their sport and individual needs. Students will get opportunities to be sports leaders and be coaches and officials with primary school students in their festivals and tournaments.

Curriculum Update



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You can find out more about each curriculum area by visiting the subject pages on our school website where you will find our Road Maps. These offer a brief visual guide to our curriculum showing the learning sequence that students will follow in each year group. Further information can be found in the detailed Curriculums Plans which outline the core aims, content and skills that students are taught.

<https://www.teignmouthsecondary.co.uk/the-tcs-curriculum/>

Staying involved in your child's learning, regardless of their age or the subject, shows you care and helps you stay connected to their school experience. Your involvement can boost their self-esteem and confidence, which are key to their success.

Another priority for the year is ensuring that our curriculum prepares students for a wide range of careers and pathways. We want our students to leave school ready to succeed, whether they continue into further study, training, or employment. Talking about future careers with your child doesn't have to mean deciding on one specific job straight away. At this stage, it's about exploring possibilities, raising aspirations, and helping them see how their learning links to the wider world. Here are some easy ways you can start these conversations at home:

Conversation Starters

- Ask your child what subjects they enjoy the most and why. How might these link to future study or careers?
- Talk about the jobs that people in your family or friendship network do. What do your child's relatives or friends enjoy about their work?
- Discuss your child's strengths and interests – are they good at problem-solving, creative thinking, working with others, or leading? How could these qualities be useful in different jobs?
- Look at news stories together and think about the range of careers connected to them (for example, in science, technology, politics, design, media, or health).
- If your child is learning about a particular topic in school, talk about the careers that use that knowledge in real life.

Useful Careers Websites

- **National Careers Service** – reliable, up-to-date information on hundreds of jobs, including skills needed and possible pathways. <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/>
- **BBC Bitesize Careers** – accessible, student-friendly resources with videos, job profiles and advice. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/careers>
- **Success at School** – guides and advice for students and parents, including links between school subjects and careers. <https://successatschool.org/>
- **CareerPilot** – particularly good for secondary school students, with interactive quizzes and future planning tools. <https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/>
- **UCAS – What Can I Do Next?** – includes the popular “Buzz Quiz” to help students think about careers that match their personality and strengths. <https://www.ucas.com/careers/buzz-quiz>

If your child is consistently having difficulties with certain subjects, it might be time to reach out to their teachers. Early intervention can lead to additional support and resources, helping your child overcome them before they become overwhelming.

If you need to contact any of your child's teachers, then all staff email addresses can be found on the school website via: <https://www.teignmouthsecondary.co.uk/general-information/staff-list/>