

Curriculum Update Spring 1

Happy New Year! We are looking forward to making 2026 the best year yet at TCS.

The curriculum at TCS is designed as a continuous journey from Year 7 to Year 13, with clear progression in knowledge, skills, and disciplinary understanding. Students move from foundational learning to more complex, specialised study, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to achieve their potential. Our curriculum is ambitious in the knowledge it offers, inclusive in the support it provides, and connected in the way it develops understanding over time.



Work Hard



Be Kind



Join In

We take pride in the professional development opportunities that we provide for staff so that they can become the best versions of themselves and best support the young people who we work with. This term staff continue their professional development sessions on meeting the needs of all of students by looking at how we use a graduated response to support students in the classroom. Staff have been working hard on how to remove barriers to learning so that all students can excel in the classroom and how they adapt their provision. Our subject teams have also been working on how we use disciplinary literacy within the curriculum. This refers to the specific reading, writing, speaking and thinking skills that are necessary for understanding and engaging with a particular subject. Each subject has its own specialised language that students need to be able to understand in order to be successful learners.

At the end of this half term we are looking forward to our upcoming Trust Development Day on the 13th February when all the schools in the Ivy Education Trust have chance to come together and work collaboratively to shape our futures. Our aim for the day will be “One Trust: doing more together, doing more the same”. As part of this day staff will have chance to attend a number of workshops and also to listen to our key note speaker Hywel Roberts who will be focussing on professional “botherness” and how we can better support every child. We are excited to learn more.

The spring term is always a busy point in the calendar for our Year 9 and Year 11 students as they begin to think more carefully about their next steps and the courses they may wish to study in the future. We look forward to welcoming all Year 9 students and parents/carers to our Preferences Evening, where they can explore the full range of Key Stage 4 courses available at TCS and learn how different choices can link to future pathways and opportunities. For our Year 11 students, who have already attended the Post-16 Options Evening, each will now take part in a Futures Interview to help them narrow down the subjects they would like to progress to. The information gathered from these conversations helps us to construct the timetable for the following academic year. This approach enables us to support as many students as possible in studying their first-choice subjects.

Our Year 11 students will also be sitting their PPEs. These mock exams are designed to replicate the final GCSE examinations as closely as possible. Students complete them in our exam halls and under formal invigilation so that they can become familiar with the experience. PPEs also provide a valuable opportunity for students to identify their strengths and areas for development as we move towards the exam season. We continue to run a series of after-school sessions for Year 11 and encourage as many students as possible to attend.

Curriculum Update





Have a look at what is coming up in the next few months for Year 7.

	PSHE Lessons	Assemblies	Events	Careers
Year 7 Spring 1	- Respect in school and in the community - Human rights - Exploring attitudes to mental health and developing resilience - Managing puberty	Making a difference to our community and the wider world	- Visiting Speaker – Professor Martin Siegert Exeter University – Climate Change - Drama Production: Into the Woods. - Basketball Young NBA cup	Apprenticeship week – Guest Speakers

	Unit of Work
English	Unit of Work: Dr Faustus Why are we learning this? The unit builds on ideas around characters battling monsters of one kind or another, introduced in term one. As well as looking in some detail at the ideas and characters in the play, we introduce the importance of considering the context in which the play was written. What different ideas did people have about the world when Marlowe wrote the play in the 1600s?
Maths	Unit of Work: 2D shapes, Perimeter and Area, Co-ordinates, Factors, Multiples and Primes, Why are we learning this? During the Autumn term we secured all the basic numeracy concepts ready to use them for skills such as Perimeter, Area, Factors, Multiples and Primes. These numerical concepts are vital for future development into year 8 and future years.
Science	Unit of Work: Hormones and Newton’s Laws Why are we learning this? Learning about hormones helps students understand how they regulate essential body functions like growth, metabolism, and reproduction. It also provides crucial knowledge about physical and emotional changes during puberty, stress responses, and health conditions such as diabetes or thyroid disorders, promoting overall health awareness and well-being. Learning Newton's laws helps students understand how objects move and interact with forces. These laws form the foundation of classical mechanics, essential for advanced physics and engineering. They also have practical applications in real-world phenomena, such as transportation, flight, and the design of machines and structures.
History	Unit of work: Medieval Realms - continued Why are we learning this? Having completed our Historical Skills unit, students begin to put this into practice with our chronological journey through history, starting with the Medieval period. The first part of this unit allows students to understand the origins of our monarchical system with the Battle of Hastings and William the Conqueror. Students then study social history through the themes of Medieval British society, including looking at towns, gender, religion, and global comparison. This unit provides the foundations for further study of the Medieval period later in Year 7, as well as contextual knowledge for our GCSE Crime and Punishment unit.
Geography	Unit of work: From Pole to Pole: How do our biomes differ? Why are we learning this? Having completed our Geographical Skills unit, students will begin to put this into practice by exploring our global biomes. The first part of this unit begins by looking at the components of ecosystems and the key terminology that is associated with this. Students will then study two biomes in detail, examining why their climate differs and how this influences biodiversity, before looking at the threats and management of such environments. This unit provides the foundations for further study of weather and sustainability. As well as contextual knowledge for our Living World unit at GCSE.

Curriculum Update				
	Unit of Work			
MFL	Unit of Work: School (present tense) Why are we learning this? Students are introduced to a range of opinions and reasons and will start to build extended sentences in writing and speaking. Students will learn the regular present tense conjugation of verbs which will be integral in future units and is pivotal developing accuracy.			
PE	Unit of Work: Developing Skills and Tactics - Basketball, Football and Trampoline Why are we learning this? In the Spring term boys will study Basketball, Football and Trampolining. In these sports students will learn the skills required to apply in game situations and use un extra-curricular clubs and school fixtures. The girls will Basketball, Football and Trampoline. 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: Tone & Colour Why are we learning this? Tone & Colour are fundamental tools that helps us develop skills in creating depth, form and mood. You will explore how to develop your skills using both pencil, pen and paint in order to create art demonstrating shadows or texture			
DT	Unit of Work: Mechanisms, Electronics, Nutrition (students work on a rotation and will have covered all by the end of the year) Why are we learning this? Students complete a range of modules in Technology, a term in the Food learning about basic healthy eating whilst learning to combine ingredients such as the rubbing in method. Basic electronics and Computer Aided Design based around a torch project. And basic hand tools & safety as these skills all form a foundation of knowledge that builds from KS2. In this module students will be working in timber to produce a mechanical toy.			
IT	Unit of Work: Computer hardware and software Why are we learning this? For this unit we will take learners on a tour through the different layers of computing systems: from programs and the operating system, to the physical components that store and execute these programs, to the fundamental binary building blocks that these components consist of.			
Drama	Unit of Work: Commedia Dell Arte Why are we learning this? Commedia Dell'Arte is a dynamic and influential theatrical style that has shaped everything from Shakespearean comedies to modern sitcoms like The Simpsons. This unit introduces students to the exciting world of stock characters, improvisation, and exaggerated physicality that make Commedia so timeless. By learning these core techniques, students will develop their skills in characterisation, physical comedy, and improvisation, all of which will enrich their understanding of performance. This foundation in Commedia will also help students identify its lasting impact on popular culture.			
Music	Unit of Work: Overtures and Themes Why are we learning this? By studying overtures and themes, students develop foundational keyboard skills essential for a wide range of musical styles. Students will learn the finger system for piano and how to apply it effectively in performance, basic stave notation and how to read it, techniques for rehearsing successfully, and how to identify the key features of a musical piece. This unit enhances students' listening and analytical skills, encouraging them to engage with the technical and expressive aspects of music, while fostering an understanding of its structural and thematic development.			
EPR	Unit of work: What can Jewish scriptures teach us? Why are we learning this? As the world becomes increasingly diverse and multicultural, students will build upon their understanding of global faith communities by exploring the beliefs and practices of Judaism. Through the study of this unit, students will examine key Jewish scriptures and narratives, including the creation story, the lives of Abraham and Moses, and the significance of the Ten Commandments. The unit will provide an opportunity to analyse how holy texts such as the Torah shape Jewish identity and guide religious life today. Core Jewish practices—including Shabbat, dietary laws, and the festival of Pesach—will be investigated to illustrate how scripture influences daily living. This unit provides the foundations for further study of religion, ethics, and philosophy at GCSE.			

	PSHE Lessons	Assemblies	Events	Careers
Year 8 Spring 1	•Exploring success and creating a meaningful life •Understanding drug use (Vaping, Smoking and Alcohol)	•Post-16 study options •Making a difference to our community and the wider world	•Life Story: Professional Footballer to the World of Work. •Drama Production: •Basketball Young NBA cup	• Apprenticeship week – Guest Speakers

	Unit of Work
English	Unit of Work: Animal Farm Why are we learning this? This unit builds on some of the skills introduced earlier in the curriculum, such as using and analysing quotations from the text to support ideas about the text. We look at character development in some detail and how the writer builds a character using methods such as dialogue and description. In addition to looking at writer's craft, this unit allows students to read and discuss a work from one of the most influential writers of the 20th century: George Orwell. Students begin to consider how writing can be a political act.
Maths	Unit of Work: Rounding, Coordinates, Area, Circles, Standard Form, Venn Diagrams Why are we learning this? This half term sees students studying a larger proportion of shape and space topic. Up until this point students in year 7 and 8 have laid strong foundation of numeracy and algebraic concepts underpinning all other areas of maths. Students will now be able to explore Area, Circles and Venn diagrams
Science	Unit of Work: DNA and Bonding Why are we learning this? Understanding DNA is crucial for grasping life’s basic mechanisms, as it contains genetic instructions for growth and function. It promotes scientific literacy, aiding comprehension of biology, genetics, and biotechnology. Studying DNA also enhances understanding of health, medicine, disease inheritance, and advancements in genetic disorder treatments. Learning about different types of bonding helps students understand how atoms form molecules and compounds, which is essential for grasping chemical reactions. This foundational knowledge is crucial in chemistry, as it provides the basis for understanding more advanced topics like molecular structure, reaction mechanisms, and material properties.
History	Unit of Work: Empire and Industry Why are we learning this? Having studied The English Civil War, students will move on chronologically to a new unit of study, exploring the Industrial Revolution, as well as the British Empire. Firstly, students will delve into the key inventions and inventors of the industrial revolution, including local pioneer Brunel. As well as this, pupils will study social history through the themes of living conditions, the experience of children and public health during the industrial revolution. The latter half of the unit allows the students to understand the reasons behind the expansion of the British empire and exposes students to the experiences of those in the colonies.
Geography	Unit of Work: How do cities differ? What makes them incredible? Why are we learning this? Having examined the concepts of development and globalisation, students will build upon this by exploring cities within contrasting levels of development. Through the study of this unit, students will explore the development of cities and their characteristics. The unit will provide an opportunity to critically analyse the challenges of urbanisation within the UK and Middle East, with a particular focus on sustainable futures.

Curriculum Update		  
Subject	Unit of Work	
MFL	Unit of Work: Where I live (+future tense) In this unit students will develop vocabulary and grammar concepts needed to describe cities and activities in town. This unit will allow students to revisit and build on their knowledge of the future tense and apply it to the new context, such as making plans for the weekend and giving more advance opinions. Why are we learning this?	
Art	Unit of Work: Pop Art and Realism with a food context Why are we learning this? Food is used as a context in order to develop observational drawing and painting skills. Students will apply their knowledge of a range of pop artists to initially draw, paint and then model food in 3D materials. This develops their skills across different mediums and their knowledge base of artists and movements	
IT	Unit of Work: Introduction of Cybersecurity Why are we learning this? During this unit we will take learners on a journey of discovery of techniques that cybercriminals use to steal data, disrupt systems, and infiltrate networks. The learners will start by considering the value their data holds and what organisations might use it for. They will then learn about social engineering and other common cybercrimes, and finally look at methods to protect against these attacks.	
Drama	Unit of Work: Intro to Devising Why are we learning this? This unit empowers students to become true actors by giving them the skills to create and shape a performance from scratch. Devising drama allows students to use their imagination and creativity to build original pieces of theatre. Throughout the unit, students will learn how to take a stimulus and transform it into a fully structured performance, using improvisation, research, and key devising techniques. By the end, students will be equipped with the tools needed to generate, develop, and refine their own unique dramatic ideas, turning them into confident performers.	
Music	Unit of Work: Blues into Jazz Why are we learning this? By studying the transition from Blues to Jazz, students gain an understanding of the origins and evolution of contemporary music genres. This unit introduces foundational techniques such as improvisation, swing rhythm, and the 12-bar blues structure. Students will learn to play characteristic patterns and scales on their chosen instrument and explore how to adapt them for expressive purposes. Through ensemble work and solo performance, they will develop confidence, creativity, and technical skills, as well as an appreciation for the cultural and historical contexts that shaped these influential styles.	
Design and Tech	Unit of Work: Material Properties, Dietary Needs, sustainability. (students work on a rotation and will have covered all by the end of the year) Why are we learning 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 – Is there an afterlife? Why are we learning this? Having explored different ideas about God in previous units, including key beliefs within Judaism and Sikhism, students will build upon this foundation by examining how these religions understand life after death. Through the study of this unit, students will investigate a range of beliefs about the afterlife and consider how these shape the ways individuals interpret the world around them. The unit will provide an opportunity to critically reflect on why the question “ <i>Is there an afterlife?</i> ” is significant, and how differing perspectives—such as those found in Hinduism—can influence people’s values, choices, and behaviours. This unit provides the foundations for deeper exploration of religious and philosophical questions at GCSE.	
PE	Unit of Work: Performing in competitive situations and developing strategies – Fitness, Football, Trampolining	

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
Year 9 Spring 1	•Taking control of your career and money •Developing Resilience •Coping with change, loss and bereavement	• GCSEs and beyond: moving towards independence	•Preferences Evening •Drama Production: •Basketball Young NBA cup	•Apprenticeship week – Guest Speakers •Careers evening – at the preferences evening.

	Unit of Work
English	Unit of Work: Dystopian Fiction Why are we learning this? Dystopian writing continues to be one of the most popular genres with young people. In this unit they continue to think about writing as a protest and political act, which we introduced in year 8 with the study of Animal Farm. Students look at a variety of texts to learn about what goes into a text to make it a dystopia and then use this knowledge to produce their own dystopian piece of writing.
Maths	Unit of Work: Error Intervals, Representations of 3D Shapes, Pythagoras' Theorem, Ratio and Proportion Why are we learning this? Skills covered in year 7 and 8 have been naturally built upon in year 9; this term continues in this manner. Rounding is extended to error intervals, ratio work now include conversion graphs and Pythagoras, one of the most famous areas of mathematics, builds on students understanding of powers of numbers.
Science	Unit of Work: Periodic Table Why are we learning this? The periodic table organizes elements based on their properties and atomic structure, helping students understand patterns in reactivity and bonding. It forms the foundation for studying chemistry and chemical reactions, while also providing crucial knowledge for real-world applications in fields like medicine, engineering, and environmental science.
History	Unit of Work: The Holocaust Why are we learning this? Having studied the background and key events of World War Two, students will be investigating the Holocaust. Within this case study, students will understand how and why the Jews and other minorities were persecuted by the Nazis in the 1930's. Students will examine the conditions faced by inmates in concentration camps, as well as learning about examples of resistance against the Nazi regime. Finally, students will understand how the Holocaust came to an end with the liberation of the camps across Europe. This provides foundational, contextual knowledge for the GCSE unit, Weimar and Nazi Germany.
Geography	Unit of Work: How do resources lead to conflict? Why are we learning this? Through unpicking what is meant be the term conflict, students will explore a series of contemporary conflicts. Students will develop an awareness of the importance of differing resources and how their finite supplies can lead to varied social, economic and environmental consequences. Through studying a range of different conflicts, students will develop an understanding of how the level of development, the legacy of colonialism and governance have shaped countries and contributed to such conflict. This provides foundational knowledge for the challenge of Resource Management at GCSE.

Curriculum Update		  
Subject	Unit of Work	
MFL	Unit of Work: Holidays (+ past tense) Why are we learning this? Having learned a range of tenses, this unit focuses on developing student's mastery in the use of Past tense. In this unit students will learn to talk and write about past events and will also put into practice previously acquired skills such as how to manipulate verbs in different persons and structure their writing using sequencing adverbs.	
Art	Unit of Work: Cultural Art- African Masks Why are we learning this? Students will be working in clay to expand their knowledge of a wide range of mediums, They will be applying their knowledge of Chief Jimoh Burraimoh to influence and inspire their mask designs. Students need to have knowledge of different artists and cultures in order to develop and inspire their own skills.	
IT	Unit of Work: Introduction of Cybersecurity Why are we learning this? During this unit we will take learners on a journey of discovery of techniques that cybercriminals use to steal data, disrupt systems, and infiltrate networks. The learners will start by considering the value their data holds and what organisations might use it for. They will then learn about social engineering and other common cybercrimes, and finally look at methods to protect against these attacks.	
Drama	Unit of Work: Blood Brothers Why are we learning this? We study Blood Brothers as an example of a script-based social issues scheme. Blood Brothers offers insights into nature vs. nurture, social class inequality, fate vs. free will, and the impact of environment on individual lives. Through script work we explore the contrasting fortunes of twins separated at birth (Mickey and Eddie) and their working-class struggles and societal limitations. Blood Brothers is a powerful, tragic story relevant to understanding social mobility and opportunity. It has clear themes, relatable characters, and allows exploration of dramatic conventions like Greek tragedy, dramatic irony and multi-role.	
Music	Unit of Work: 20th Century techniques Minimalism / Serialism Refining knowledge of composition through the use of 20th century techniques • How composition developed at the start of the 20th century • What the key features of minimalism are • How to compose music in a minimalist style • How to compose music in a serialist style • How to create a high-quality composition using the above given stylistic techniques Why are we learning this? This unit refines student's composition skills through the exploration of 20th-century techniques, including minimalism and serialism styles. Students learn the key features of these genres, how to compose in each style, and how to create a high-quality composition using these techniques. The unit also examines how composition evolved at the start of the 20th century, giving students a deeper understanding of musical development during this period.	
DT	Unit of Work: Programming, Engineering, Timber Why are we learning 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 sheet metal bender in order to manufacture the over the door hook from a technical 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: Does God exist? Why are we learning this? Building on our previous work developing core philosophical skills, this unit invites students to explore one of the most significant and enduring questions in human thought: Does God exist? Students will examine what different people mean when they talk about 'God', and investigate a range of classical and modern arguments both for and against God's existence. Through the study of key thinkers including Aquinas, Hume, Freud and Marx, students will consider how philosophical, scientific and psychological perspectives shape beliefs about God and reality. Students will also explore Humanist views to understand how people may find meaning without religion. By engaging with these ideas, students will develop the ability to analyse complex arguments, weigh evidence and reflect critically on how different worldviews influence human behaviour, ethics and ways of understanding the world.	
PE	Unit of Work: Developing as sports performers and leaders – Badminton, Football, Trampolining	

Curriculum Update



**Work
Hard**



Be Kind



Join In

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.

All students in Years 8 to 13 now have access to **Unifrog**, an online platform designed to help them explore their next steps and understand the wide range of career pathways available to them. Unifrog brings together information on further education, apprenticeships, university courses, and different career routes all in one place, making it easier for students to research and compare their options.

Some of the most useful features include:

- **Personality and interest quizzes** that help students identify possible careers suited to their strengths.
- **Detailed career profiles** explaining what different jobs involve, the skills required, and potential salary ranges.
- **Post-16 and Post-18 course information**, enabling students to explore sixth-form subjects, apprenticeships, and university courses.
- **Support with applications**, including guidance on writing personal statements and CVs.

Students will also be using Unifrog as part of their **PSHE curriculum**, where they will complete activities that encourage them to think about their aspirations, develop key skills, and plan for their future. We encourage parents and carers to ask their child about Unifrog and explore the platform with them at home.

All of our Year 10 students have the opportunity to take part in a week of work experience, giving them valuable insight into the world of work. This allows them to step outside the classroom, develop independence, and gain a clearer sense of the types of careers that might interest them. Work experience also helps students build important skills such as communication, teamwork, and time management, while giving them a taste of real workplace expectations. Many students find that the week boosts their confidence and helps them think more carefully about their future choices.

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>