



YEAR 8 2016



# Curriculum HANDBOOK

# Mission Statement

In a supportive Christian environment, reflecting the philosophy of the Sisters of the Society of the Sacred Advent, St Margaret's Anglican Girls School aims to provide excellence in teaching and learning within a broad, balanced and flexible curriculum complemented by other school activities; preparing confident, compassionate and capable young women able to contribute in a global community.

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June 2015

Dear Parents / Guardians

The early years of Secondary School are a very exciting time for your daughter and it is with great pleasure that we present the Year 8 Curriculum Handbook.

This book outlines the subjects which your daughter will undertake in 2016. These are reflective of the Australian Curriculum and current trends in pedagogy. Students will study: English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities, The Arts (Drama, Music and Visual Art on a rotational basis), Religious and Values Education, Health and Physical Education, HOT Skills and Personal Development. As well as this, your daughter will be able to choose one language from a choice of: French or Chinese (Mandarin). Students with learning difficulties or who are from a background with English as a second language will be able to undertake Learning Enhancement instead of a language choice.

If you have any particular questions in relation to the information contained in this Handbook or regarding your daughter's choice of Language, please contact the Dean of Academics, Ms Samantha Bolton, or the relevant Head of Faculty. Contact numbers are recorded at the back of this Handbook.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ros Curtis'.

Ros Curtis  
PRINCIPAL

# The Year 8 Curriculum

The Year 8 curriculum is designed to foster positive attitudes to learning and promote productive strategies. As such, the focus is on balance across the range of subject disciplines. We will consistently take the opportunity to engage students in conversations about what learning involves and how it is best facilitated.

Each of the subjects the girls will be studying comprises of content components and skill components. In Year 8 the focus is on the process of learning rather than the outcomes. Of course when attention is given to the way students are learning there are inevitable benefits in terms of outcomes.

We look forward to sharing the learning journey in Year 8 with you and your daughters. We welcome the challenges which this will entail in the knowledge that they are essential to ensure optimal learning in all spheres.

# ENGLISH

## COURSE OVERVIEW

At St Margaret's Anglican Girls School, students employ imagination, creativity and their appreciation of world views to interpret and construct English texts that share their ideas, persuade audiences and address issues and events in their own lives and communities.

The Year 8 English program therefore provides our students with repeated opportunities to engage with the capabilities outlined in the Australian Curriculum. The study of English is central to the learning and development of students in Australia, and although Australia is a culturally diverse nation, the ability to communicate effectively and precisely in the English language is integral to participation in all areas of Australian life. English will therefore allow students to develop their skills and knowledge in the area of English, as ethical and thoughtful members of Australian society, and they will be presented with opportunities to engage imaginatively and critically with literature.

## TOPICS OF STUDY

English at St Margaret's is organised according to the three interrelated content strands laid out by the Australian Curriculum - Language, Literature and Literacy. These strands are interrelated and their content is taught in an integrated way, and collectively they describe the skills learnt in English, as well as important areas of knowledge and understanding.

During the year, students will consider a variety of different topics, beginning the year with a consideration of their own lives as readers of literature and story, as well as undertaking two separate novel studies, and finishing the year by exploring the ways in which texts are partial and biased representations of reality, through engaging with a unit centred around the deconstruction of science-fiction media texts.

## LEARNING EXPERIENCES

In English, students learn to speak, listen to, read, view, write and shape texts. They develop their ability to analyse how texts are constructed for particular purposes and to suit different contexts. Students are also expected to make deliberate choices when constructing their own texts in order to achieve different purposes.

The Year 8 English course also embeds the explicit teaching of spelling and grammar, with activities being completed regularly, either in-class or as homework.

## ASSESSMENT

Assessment in English at St Margaret's Anglican Girls School allows for the collection of evidence of student learning over time to allow for an on-balance judgment about the quality of student achievement, as well as to assist students to achieve success in their English studies through the provision of effective feedback, careful monitoring, and a balanced coverage of the English content descriptions outlined in the Australian Curriculum.

# HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

## COURSE OVERVIEW

The Year 8 Health and Physical Education program supports students in refining their decision-making skills in relation to their health and provides them with opportunities to develop movement competence in a range of physical activities. Health contexts include personal fitness evaluations, changes associated with puberty and reproductive health, tobacco use and inequities between population groups. Movement contexts include games and sports (in the water and on land), health-related, rhythmic and expressive activities. Students have three HPE lessons per week – two concentrating on practical elements and one focusing on health education and/or personal development. By the end of Year 8, students will have completed their Bronze Star Award with the Royal Lifesaving Society, Queensland.

## TOPICS OF STUDY

Semester	Promoting Health & Personal Development – theory elements	Developing skills for physical activity – practical elements
1	What is Health? How fit are you? Growing and Changing - adolescent body issues	Aquatics - stroke correction Personal fitness assessment Large Ball Handling skills Creative Movement
2	Drug Use and Abuse – Women and smoking Special Population Groups	Small Ball Handling skills Rhythmic Gymnastics or Cultural Storytelling Royal Lifesaving Bronze Star Award

## GENERAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Students will:

- demonstrate a range of strategies that allows them to access/evaluate information and services whilst promoting their own health and that of others in their community
- develop more complex skills in a range of physical activity settings
- analyse how body control and coordination influence movement composition and performance
- learn to transfer skills and concepts across a variety of practical contexts
- refine their personal, social, critical/creative thinking skills as they participate in a range of activities.

## SPECIFIC LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Students will:

- conduct a personal fitness evaluation and provide recommendations to improve components.
- investigate changes associated with puberty and practices that support reproductive health
- design a health promotion campaign aimed at improving the health of young people in their community
- modify movement skills and sequences in games and physical activity
- apply a range of tactics and strategies to a variety of sports
- perform and evaluate individual and group routines
- propose and role play realistic responses to a range of scenarios where an individual's safety may be at risk (Royal Life Saving Society - Bronze Star Lifesaving Medallion)

## ASSESSMENT

On-going assessment occurs throughout each semester in all practical subjects. Students complete the following assessment tasks for Health and Personal Development:

- Personal Fitness Evaluation - report and recommendations
- Growing and Changing – written exam
- Drug use and Abuse – campaign and evaluation on Women and Smoking
- Special Population Groups – group assignment

# HOT (Higher Order Thinking) Skills

## COURSE OVERVIEW

HOT Skills is a new subject designed specifically for Year 8s in 2016. As the name suggests, it focuses on promoting students' development of higher order thinking skills. Such skills (detailed below), are become increasingly fundamental to academic success throughout secondary school and beyond. The course will link directly with the curriculum of the girls' other subjects. This will allow greater reinforcement and transfer of the skills involved.

## TOPICS OF STUDY

- What is Knowledge?
- The Thinking Ladder – **remembering, comprehending, interpreting, analysing, evaluating, synthesising**
- Metacognition

## LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Students will be involved in learning experiences, which are both online and classroom based. These experiences will foster an understanding of how the brain works and the different levels of thinking human beings are required to engage in throughout their lives. Much of the learning will be collaborative and will allow a focus on increasing the girls' capacity to communicate well in a range of contexts.

## ASSESSMENT

Assessment is not a focus of this subject and as such there will not be any formal testing. The course will link to assessment in other subjects and will culminate in a collaborative project in Term 4.



# HUMANITIES

The study of Humanities focuses on the disciplines of History and Geography. Over the course of the year, students will complete a six month study of each subject area and develop specialist skills related to each discipline.

Through the study of Geography students will investigate the interrelated nature of physical and cultural processes in a landscape. Through their landform inquiry they will develop an appreciation for the value that different peoples and cultures place on landscapes and the significant impact that hazards can have on both ecosystems and communities. Australian and international examples will be used to analyse how landscapes can be changed and managed. Similarly, changes to Australia's demographic characteristics will be compared to international examples such as China and the United States of America. Internal migration patterns, population distributions and the social, economic and environmental impacts of populations will be considered.

In History, students will learn about the period between the ancient world and the late Renaissance. Life in Medieval Europe, the structure of society, significant achievements of the time and the role of the Church and State will all be investigated and compared to life in Feudal Japan under the Shoguns. The expansion of European power and influence will be explored in the final unit of the year focusing on the conquest of the Americas by the Spanish in the sixteenth century. Through a historical inquiry students will discover when, how and why Europeans interacted with various societies in the Americas and the impacts that these contacts had on both the indigenous populations and the imperialist powers.

## TOPICS OF STUDY

### Geography:

- Landforms and landscapes
- Changing nations

### History:

- The Medieval World (c590 –c1500)
- Shogunate Japan (c794 – 1867)
- The Spanish Conquest of the Americas (c1492 – c1572)

## LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- Investigating ecosystems and analysing the processes that have created them.
- Investigating land management practices at various scales and the impacts and effects of natural hazards
- Inquiring about young people's perceptions of space and place, communities and population characteristics
- Manipulating statistics, drawing conclusions and predicting future scenarios, mapping and graphing techniques, field work and the use of spatial technologies.
- Analysing the location of civilisations and how this has impacted on their development.
- Researching and evaluating the role that key individuals played in the growth of a civilization through the use of primary and secondary source material.
- Engaging in activities that require the critiquing of evidence and the drawing of conclusions.
- Analysing the structure of feudal societies, the impact of the church and modernisation on development.
- Identifying the reasons for European expansion and exploration in the Americas and the consequences of this development.

## ASSESSMENT

- Field trips
- Oral presentations
- Essays
- Practical & Short response tests

# LANGUAGES – CHINESE (MANDARIN) OR FRENCH

## COURSE OVERVIEW

Languages are the medium through which we learn about the world and develop curiosity about new ideas, values, peoples and places. Since knowledge about social relations and cultural identity are dependent on language, the study of a language extends, diversifies and enriches our ways of thinking and stimulates an appreciation of our own language and culture. At St Margaret's, students are able to study either French or Mandarin.

Learning a language is about communication. It involves the ability to comprehend and compose, and includes the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Learners communicate with real language for genuine purposes. Students will achieve communicative ability by using various skills and strategies in culturally appropriate ways within realistic contexts.

The benefits of learning a language accrue not only to the individual but also to the nation as a whole. Our trade, cultural and tourist links with other countries are enhanced if we have a pool of varied language expertise, including Australians from both English and non-English speaking backgrounds. The ability to use a language other than English can increase students' post-school options in a country with such strong international links. Experience has shown that learning a language contributes to and enriches the educational, intellectual, personal, social and cultural development of learners and has the potential to improve the quality of their participation in a rapidly changing world. As an incentive to continue the study of Languages, some Queensland universities offer two selection rank points to any student who receives at least a Sound Achievement at the end of Year 12.

## TOPICS OF STUDY

The following topics are commonly explored during the language course: getting to know you, nationality, weather, family, famous places, food, school, pets, telling time, free time, places to visit, transport, likes and dislikes, leisure activities, shopping, money, music, health and well-being, celebrations, seasons, fashion, entertainment, animals, and housing.

## LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Language classes are fundamentally interactive, therefore, as a broad principle of methodology; the focus of language learning experiences is on successful communication. Learning experiences in languages are designed to encourage students to process meaningful portions of language rather than to focus on single words. The language course includes learning experiences such as: performing and viewing role plays; conducting / designing interviews; watching films and listening to radio broadcasts; reading newspaper and magazine articles, advertisements, and simple books; making lists and writing reports, articles and letters; and recording events as diary entries and simple narratives. A range of digital technologies are incorporated during many of the learning experiences in languages to allow for direct participation and engagement in the target language and culture.

## ASSESSMENT

Students undertake one test for each of the macro-skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking per semester. The macro-skills are equally weighted and include unpredictable language which gives students the opportunity to respond spontaneously in unrehearsed situations.

# LEARNING ENHANCEMENT – Elective

Learning Enhancement is a course of study for students requiring intense literacy and numeracy support across all the curriculum areas. Skills in the specific area of academic learning of Writing, Reading, Speaking, Listening, Organisation and Numeracy are developed throughout the course. The program supports courses of work in other high literacy and numeracy demand areas such as English, Mathematics, Science and Humanities and develops the macro and micro skills within these contexts. The course consolidates relevant content, coherence and standard documentation in academic writing of various types. Students are also introduced to different study skill strategies.

The course is selected as an elective for students with a diagnosed disability, identified learning difficulty or requiring ESL support. Students can choose to attend Learning Enhancement for a semester or a full year provided they meet the eligibility standard as outlined in the Learning Enhancement Policy.

## COURSE CONTENT

### LITERACY SKILLS

#### WRITING

Students will work toward competency:

- Using various techniques to plan, scaffold, draft, edit, revise and self-edit
- Paragraph writing
- Recognising essay structure and adhere to criteria guidelines
- Developing hypotheses and recognising themes
- Organisation skills, researching skills and comprehension of texts
- Writing various text types as required by individual subject areas: incorporating skills such as cause and effect, comparison and contrast, definition, division and classification, narration, argumentation/persuasion and research
- Using appropriate grammatical structures and punctuation

#### READING

Students will work toward competency:

- Finding the meaning of vocabulary using context clues and decoding strategies
- Understanding a wider range of content words, technical language and idiomatic expressions
- Identifying themes, plot and understanding of characters
- Using higher order comprehension skills
- Visual literacy skills
- Reading and interpreting various tables, diagrams, maps and charts

### LISTENING AND SPEAKING

Students will work toward competency:

- Practising formal class presentations
- Active listening
- Participate in formal and informal conversations and group discussions

### ORGANISATION

Students will work toward competency:

- Taking notes, paraphrasing and summarising
- Independent learning skills
- Organisation
- Goal setting
- Time management
- Exam strategies
- Research skills

### NUMERACY SKILLS

Students will work toward competency:

- Understanding and using Mathematical skills and strategies
- Recognising and understanding of basic calculation
- Consolidating Mathematics that mirrors current class work
- Developing the language of Mathematics
- Comprehension and strategies for problem solving

# MATHEMATICS

## COURSE OVERVIEW

The Year 8 curriculum focuses on developing and refining mathematical understanding, fluency, logical reasoning, analytical thought and problem-solving skills. The content involved in this subject is organised into a number of strands, which in turn includes a number of topics. These strands are:

- (i) Number and Algebra
- (ii) Measurement and Geometry
- (iii) Statistics and Probability

Underpinning the study of Mathematics at St Margaret's are the following general capabilities:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Information and communication technology (ICT) capability
- Critical and creative thinking
- Personal and social capability
- Ethical understanding
- Intercultural understanding.

## TOPICS OF STUDY

- Integers
- Angles and Polygons
- Fractions, Decimals and Percentage
- Measurement
- Introductory Algebra
- Ratio and Rates
- Equations and Inequalities
- Probability and Statistics
- Straight line graphs
- Transformations and congruence

## LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- Emphasis on developing and refining core skills and processes
- Introduction and use of a variety of technologies as tools for supporting learning and inquiry
- Challenging and engaging experiences which promote inquiry and the development of strategic thinking skills required for problem solving in the real world.

## ASSESSMENT

Multiple opportunities will exist for the demonstration of learning outcomes with an emphasis on developing and refining core skills and processes through a system of second chance testing.

- End of term and end of semester tests
- Mastery learning quizzes

# RELIGIOUS & VALUES EDUCATION (RVE)

## COURSE OVERVIEW

Religious and Values Education introduces the students to a Christian way of life, as well as the aims and objectives of the Sisters of the Society of the Sacred Advent.

## TOPICS OF STUDY

- Introduction to the Old Testament – Women of the Bible
- The Story of Ruth
- “Big Questions” – Christian Living and The Bible
- The Liturgical Year – Lent and Easter
- World Religions – sacred places
- Cathedrals around the world

## LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- Exploration of the sacraments of Baptism and Communion
- Researching great world Cathedrals
- Guided tour of St John’s Cathedral
- Participation in / and preparation for Chapel services

## ASSESSMENT

Tasks and assessment for RVE are carried out during class time and may involve: short responses, brochure on the School Chapel and poster and PowerPoint presentations on a well-known Cathedral.

# SCIENCE

## COURSE OVERVIEW

The study of Science at St Margaret's develops the six overarching ideas of the National Curriculum in science: patterns, order, and organisation; form and function; stability and change; systems; scale and measurement, and matter and energy. The curriculum at St Margaret's provides opportunities for students to develop an understanding of important scientific concepts and processes, as well as the practices used to develop scientific knowledge, or science's contribution to our culture and society, and its application to our lives. The curriculum supports students in gaining an understanding of science to develop the necessary skills to make informed decisions, and to participate in science-related careers if they wish.

## TOPICS OF STUDY

The topics of study in Science include scientific methods and practices featured in Chemistry and Biology and Earth Science.

## LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Students will discover the properties of the different states of matter in terms of the motion and arrangement of particles, and be able to describe differences between elements, compounds and reacting substances so as to observe chemical change, and to form new substances. Microscopes will be used to delve cells and to observe these basic units of living things.

Energy can cause change within systems, and students will experience energy in different forms, including kinetic, heat, and potential energies.

The processes that occur deep within the earth will be discovered, together with the types of rock, and the active nature of our planet will be investigated. Students will also delve into a range of contemporary issues where their problem solving skills will be enhanced. Science and technology will contribute to finding these solutions, and the impact of this science on society will be studied.

## ASSESSMENT

Assessment includes examinations, experimental investigations, and assignments, where students will have the opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of the curriculum content. Achievement is assessed through the criteria of Knowledge and Understanding, Investigative Processes, and Evaluating and Concluding. The prior testing before units and reflection will be an important component of formative testing.

# THE ARTS - DRAMA, MUSIC, VISUAL ART

## COURSE OVERVIEW

The Year 8 Arts subjects are Drama, Music and Visual Art. Students will experience each of the Arts subjects on a 13 week rotational basis during the year. Separately and collectively these subjects engage, inspire and enrich students' lives by developing their creative potential, understanding of the world, productive use of time and the skills required for lifelong learning.

## TOPICS OF STUDY

### Drama "Shed my Skin"

- Drama involves modifying dramatic elements and conventions to express ideas, consider intended audiences and intended purposes, through dramatic action based on real or imagined events.
- Core content: Elements of Drama, Analysis of Drama, Acting techniques, Script writing, Play texts, Improvisation and non-realistic Conventions

### Visual Art

- Visual Art challenges students to use skills, techniques, processes, materials and to plan and create Visual Art works. Students reflect upon, refine and display their work. Practical work is underpinned by research to understand and respond to a range of art practices
- Students will explore art concepts and ideas which relate to their own backgrounds and experience under the unit focus: Identikit. Media and techniques explored include: Self-portrait painting and printmaking processes.

### Music "Finding your groove!"

- Music involves the development of skills, techniques, understanding and appreciation of music in today's society. Music concepts and literacy skills are enhanced while participating in exciting music-making learning experiences.
- Students experience the performance context while participating in contemporary 'band' situations. Instruments played include keyboard, guitar, bass guitar and drums.
- Students explore contemporary composition techniques through the use of Garage Band and multi-track recording.

## LEARNING EXPERIENCES IN THE ARTS

- Acting, improvising, comedy, script writing, singing, playing musical instruments, composing, analysing music, drawing, construction, painting, sculpting, design thinking and product design

The Arts aims to develop students':

- Creativity, imagination, technical ability, aesthetic appreciation, critical thinking and self confidence
- Skills in research and the use of innovative arts practices and technologies to express ideas
- Aesthetic knowledge and communication: valuing and sharing arts experiences
- Insights into local, national and global cultures and arts traditions

## ASSESSMENT

- Knowledge and understanding
- Creating
- Presenting
- Reflecting

# Contact Details

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