

St Margaret's



Curriculum HANDBOOK

YEAR 8 2024



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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.



A local school with a global outlook

May 2023

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.

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. Each of the subjects the girls will be studying comprises of content components and skills components.

This handbook outlines the subjects which your daughter will undertake in 2024. These are reflective of the Australian Curriculum and current trends in pedagogy. Students will study English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities or Humanities Learning Enhancement (HumLE), Religious and Values Education, Health and Physical Education, Digital Technologies, French or Chinese (Mandarin) and 2 Arts subjects (Either Drama, Music or Visual Art).

If you have any questions in relation to the information contained in this Handbook, please contact the Dean of Studies, Mr Chris Dunn, or the relevant Head of Faculty. Contact numbers are recorded at the back of this Handbook.

We look forward to sharing the learning journey in Year 8 with you and your daughter.

Regards

Ros Curtis
PRINCIPAL

PROCESS FOR ONLINE SELECTION

In Term Two, Year 7 students will be required to select two Arts subjects through the online process outlined below.

1. Each student will receive an email with the information required for entering their subject preferences online.
2. For your records, please print a receipt of your subject selections. This is for your reference only - there is no need to submit this receipt to the school as we have an electronic copy of your preferences.

If there are any difficulties with the online process please contact the Executive Assistant to the Deputy Principal on 3862 0771.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

COURSE OVERVIEW

Digital Technologies provides the opportunity for students to explore a range of cutting-edge technologies and develop skills in some of the industry's most popular programs.

Through hands-on activities and projects, they will learn how computer hardware works and the different components that make up their own devices. Students will explore the internet and its workings, from the basics of web browsing to more advanced topics such as cloud computing and networking, while focusing on cyber safety and best practices to keep their information safe online.

The subject includes a dive into the world of virtual and augmented reality, where students will learn how these technologies are used in the real world. You will use industry standard programs such as Photoshop and Premiere Pro to create visually stunning graphics and videos while developing transferable skills that will benefit them in many subjects throughout your schooling life.

Students will have the opportunity to learn Python, a popular programming language used worldwide, through Minecraft Education. Minecraft Education provides a fun and engaging way to learn coding skills and develop problem-solving abilities while building and exploring virtual worlds.

Digital Technologies covers robotics through MicroBits, where you will learn how to code and program these tiny devices to create innovative and interactive projects.

By the end, students will have developed a range of skills and knowledge that will be valuable in any field, from graphic design and video production to software development and robotics.

FOCUS AREAS

The focus area for Digital Technologies in Year 8 will be:

- Research Skills and Using the Web Effectively
- Computational Thinking and Using Our Devices Effectively
- Intermediate Coding and Project Based Thinking
- Digital Media Design

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Students will be involved in a range of learning experiences relating to the development of their understanding of Digital Technologies. The subject will be highly practical and students will be required to utilise their school laptops as well as other technologies in every lesson.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is not the focus of this subject and as such there will not be any formal testing. The course will link and support other subjects by developing skills.

At the end of each term, students will be required to produce a short digital portfolio to reflect on their development in the subject. This may be in the format of a one-minute video.

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 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 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.

Throughout the year, students will consider a variety of topics which involve them exploring the ways in which texts offer persuasive and reflective viewpoints and how language can be used for emotive and aesthetic impact on readers. Students will explore a variety of literary and non-literary texts, including:

- Contemporary novels such as *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and *The Bone Sparrow*
- A selection of classic and contemporary protest poems and songs
- A selection of famous speeches by well-known figures throughout history

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.

To complement the units on offer, the Year 8 English course embeds the explicit teaching of literacy skills through the Literacy Boost Program which focuses on spelling, punctuation, grammar and reading comprehension, with activities being completed on a weekly basis. The emphasis of the Literacy Boost program is on students mastering their ability to apply their explicit literacy learning to their own writing.

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. Over the course of the year, students will prepare an analytical seminar presentation, a short story, an analytical essay and the script of a persuasive speech.

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, nutrition, respectful relationships and making healthy and safe choices. Movement contexts include aquatic activities, games and sports and movement and expressive activities. Students have three HPE lessons per week – two concentrating on the practical elements and one on the theoretical components. The following table illustrates the foci areas Year 8 students may participate in during the year.

TOPICS OF STUDY

Sem	Theory Elements	Practical Elements
1	Optimising Performance Decision Time	Aquatic Activities – Swimming & Rowing AFL
2	Nutrition Mental Health and Wellbeing	Striking Sports – Cricket / Softball / Tennis Artistic swimming

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- Planning and implementing strategies, using health resources, to enhance their own and others' health, safety, relationships and wellbeing
- Refining protective behaviours and evaluate community resources to seek help for themselves and others
- Designing and justifying strategies to increase physical activity levels to achieve health and wellbeing outcomes
- Learning to transfer skills and concepts across a variety of practical contexts.
- Modifying movement skills and sequences in sport and physical activity.
- Applying a range of tactics and strategies to a variety of sports
- Performing and evaluating individual and group routines.

ASSESSMENT

On-going assessment occurs throughout each term in all practical subjects. Students complete the following listed assessment tasks for the theory component of Health and Physical Education:

- Research Report – Optimising Performance
- Exam - Nutrition

HUMANITIES

COURSE OVERVIEW

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. In their focus on urbanisation, students will investigate demographic patterns around the world, comparing Australia's population distribution with other nations. Students will investigate and analyse the social, economic and environmental impacts of urbanisation and use data to evaluate solutions to urban challenges in Asia.

In History, students will learn about the period between the ancient world and the late Renaissance. This is a point in History when the modern world began to take shape-where major civilisations around the world encountered each other and as a result, social, economic, religious and political beliefs were often challenged and significantly changed. 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. 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.

TOPICS OF STUDY

Geography:

- Landforms and landscapes
- Changing nations: Urbanisation

History:

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

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- Investigating landforms and landscapes and analysing the processes that have created them through a range of maps and Geographical data
- Analysing the value placed on landforms and landscapes and the impact they have on our lives
- Investigating ways of preserving and conserving the natural world; judging the success of these
- Using data to analyse and draw conclusions about change over time
- Analysing historical evidence to draw conclusions
- Making judgements about the quality of evidence for answering historical questions
- *Communicating views, orally and in writing, to support a judgement*

ASSESSMENT

- Short Response tests
- Data Report

HUMANITIES LEARNING ENHANCEMENT (HUMLE)

COURSE OVERVIEW

Humanities Learning Enhancement is a supported small-group subject, where assistance is provided on study skills, assistive technology and support for assessment. This subject is offered on an invitation only basis to students who require additional support in their learning.

Students still complete the core work of the Humanities subject, but it is simplified and with a reduced workload, and at least two lessons a week are provided to the students to catch up on homework, get support with difficult subjects and assessment tasks, and learn about different technology and study strategies that may assist them with their academic workload.

This subject was introduced to relieve some of the pressure of the transition to high school. Students in this subject will not be graded in this subject but will receive a comment on their end of semester report cards about their progress and effort.

LANGUAGES – 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, the study of either French or Chinese is compulsory in Year 8.

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.

TOPICS OF STUDY

The following topics are explored during the Year 8 French course:

- School: subjects, timetables, preferences, strengths and weaknesses, discussing marks; classroom instructions; telling the time
- Daily routine and leisure activities
- Dining out in a restaurant and interacting with restaurant staff
- Shopping for clothing and other items
- Asking for and following directions around town
- Discussing future holiday plans

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; reading and listening to simple authentic texts such as advertisements, letters and conversations; making lists and writing articles and emails. 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 assessment each semester which covers a combination of the following macro-skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. The macro-skills are equally weighted and include unpredictable language which gives students the opportunity to respond spontaneously in unrehearsed situations.

LANGUAGES – CHINESE (MANDARIN)

COURSE OVERVIEW

The Year 8 Chinese course is designed to build on the skills developed in the Year 7 Chinese course. Students will continue working towards fluency in the world's most spoken language. They will be engaged in a variety of carefully curated learning experiences to boost their knowledge of both Chinese language and culture. There will be a strong emphasis on building core vocabulary and grammar as well as the development of analysis and evaluation skills. Students will also begin to develop more independence in their learning by utilising new tools such as online dictionaries. At St Margaret's, the study of either French or Chinese is compulsory in Year 8.

Support is available to assist students who begin the study of Chinese in Year 8.

TOPICS OF STUDY

My School Life – Did you know that most Chinese students start school at about 7am and finish classes at about 10pm? In this unit students will examine the difficulties Chinese students face in their school life. They will also express opinions about the subjects they study and describe their school timetable and class, as well as nationalities of their classmates.

Food and Drinks – Students learn to discuss food and drink and talk about their preferences. They also learn to describe what food they and other people eat on different days and for different meals. Students will learn to order food and role play a scene at a Chinese restaurant. They will also explore how food plays a significant role in Chinese culture.

Holidays – Students will learn to describe different places they would like to spend their holidays and the activities that they might do there. They also learn to talk about different modes of transport and discuss how they travel to different destinations. Students learn to describe the weather in the past and the future. They also learn to talk about countries, languages and nationalities. They explore different kinds of activities that Chinese people take part in during their holidays.

All about Me – In this unit students will talk about appearance, describing themselves and others. They will describe their bedrooms in terms of furniture and colours and give opinions about their living space. Students will then create and deliver a presentation about their bedroom.

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

A wide range of teaching and learning methods will be used to cater to various types of learners, incorporating digital technologies where appropriate. Students will apply their learning to the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing (including handwriting and typing). They will gain experience using language through a wide range of activities which involve playing games, singing songs, accessing authentic texts, using online tools and platforms, analysing, inferring, creating, collaborating and performing.

ASSESSMENT

A variety of assessment techniques will be used including assignments and exams. Students will create typed and handwritten texts, digital presentations and spoken presentations and will access a range of written and spoken texts to demonstrate their comprehension and analysis skills.

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 the following strands:

- (i) Number
- (ii) Algebra
- (iii) Measurement
- (iv) Space
- (v) Statistics
- (vi) Probability

Underpinning the study of Mathematics at St Margaret's are the following General Capabilities and Cross-curriculum priorities:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Critical and creative thinking
- Digital Literacy
- Ethical understanding

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures
- Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia
- Sustainability

TOPICS OF STUDY

- Unit 1: Number Theory
- Unit 2: Algebraic expressions
- Unit 3: Linear relations
- Unit 4: Space
- Unit 5: Measurement
- Unit 6: Probability
- Unit 7: Statistics

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

One exam per term on the content covered.

RELIGIOUS & VALUES EDUCATION (RVE)

COURSE OVERVIEW

Religious and Values Education helps students to explore their own values and beliefs by learning how others see the world. Drawing on the Anglican Schools Commission syllabus, RVE lessons invite students to learn about how people of faith respond to the challenges, joys and questions of everyday life. Case studies from ancient as well as modern times, popular culture alongside the academic world are used to support students in developing and exploring their own values. The ethos of RVE classrooms is one of active listening, respect for others, curiosity, and an open mind.

TOPICS OF STUDY

- Learning from the Sisters of the SSA: Ordinary people, changing lives
- The Power of Rituals
- Women in the Bible: their story, our story
- Women bearing witness: women of faith changing lives today

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- Reading: excerpts from Religious texts, religious and secular stories
- Watching: excerpts from film, documentary and television to learn about faith at home and overseas
- Discussion: pair and small group, whole class exchange of ideas
- Writing: personal reflection on the connection between ourselves and others
- Visiting: The School Chapel, the Sisters Chapel

ASSESSMENT

There is no formal assessment in Religious and Values Education

SCIENCE

COURSE OVERVIEW

The study of Science at St Margaret's develops the six overarching ideas of the Australian Curriculum in Science: patterns, order and organisation; form and function; stability and change; systems; scale and measurement; and matter and energy. The curriculum provides opportunities for students to develop an understanding of the 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 so to participate in science related careers if they wish.

TOPICS OF STUDY

The topics of study for Year 8 Science include:

- Cells
- Rocks/Geology
- Living Systems
- Energy
- Substances & Chemical Change
- Reproduction

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Students will develop their scientific skills and understanding through the following learning experiences during Year 8 Science:

- Practical laboratory classes – including student-led experiments
- Kinaesthetic activities
- Multimodal presentations
- Inquiry-based learning activities
- Exercises involving analysis and interpretation of data
- Exercises involving evaluation of data

ASSESSMENT

Students will be given Formative Assessment Tasks throughout the Semester.

The Year 8 Science Assessment Plan includes the following tasks per semester:

- 1 x Student Experiment Task/Data Analysis Task
- 1 x End of Semester Examination (assessing all three units covered in the semester).

End of Semester Examination will be assessing the following criteria:

- Science Understanding (60%)
- Analysing, Applying and Interpreting Data (40%)

THE ARTS - Drama

COURSE OVERVIEW

In Year 8 Drama students will begin to explore the Elements of Drama as the foundation for shaping, performing and responding to drama. The course is mostly practical, providing students with performance skills to confidently and effectively engage an audience. Focus is placed on the development of roles, relationships and situations in both devised and scripted drama for performance. Students will also develop their knowledge and understanding of a range of dramatic concepts for application in their own devised work as well as when analysing drama presented by themselves and their peers.

TOPICS OF STUDY

- Elements of Drama in practice
- Character analysis and script interpretation
- Acting for performance
- Devising original performances

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- Manipulating the Elements of Drama
- Exploring the conventions of a range of dramatic styles
- Acting Skills (voice and movement)
- Analysis of drama as performed by themselves and their peers
- Analysing and interpreting published scripts
- Developing improvisation skills and applying these to a range of familiar and new contexts
- Viewing live recorded performances
- Developing literacy through text and visually based drama
- Exploring stagecraft through choices in set, props and staging as well as audio-visual components

ASSESSMENT

Assessment tasks occur in the areas of Making and Responding and include devising drama based on a given stimulus, the development of original scenes, performances of scenes from published scripts and responding to the performances of themselves and their peers. While assessment in Drama occurs both individually and in small groups, each student is assessed individually in all situations using the specific Drama criteria.

- Exploring and responding
- Developing practices and skills
- Creating and making
- Presenting and performing

THE ARTS - Music

COURSE OVERVIEW

Students live in a world in which music has an important and persuasive presence. Whether actively engaged in music by listening, performing or composing, or incidentally encountering music, students have an individual experience, and the Year 8 course builds on this. Music contributes to the holistic development of the individual through aspects such as memory, co-ordination, concentration and creativity. Students studying Music are empowered by the medium of music to gain insight into their ever-changing world, to develop self-discipline and to deepen their aesthetic awareness. Central to the Year 8 Music course are the three interacting dimensions of listening, composing and performing.

TOPICS OF STUDY

The Year 8 Music course prepares students for the highly anticipated “Battle of the Bands” in which students form their own rock bands and prepare a song for a live performance for the school community. Students develop performance skills learnt in Year 7 by using the guitar, drum kit, piano and voice. Composition skills are developed as students write and record their own songs utilising technological processes. Students analyse contemporary songs and performers from a variety of styles.

Topic: *Finding your Groove!*

- Music concepts and literacy skills will be enhanced while participating in engaging music-making learning experiences:
 - In Semester 1 students will develop performance skills on a variety of instruments including guitar, keyboard and drums.
 - In Semester 2, students will have the opportunity to perform as soloists or in small bands. They will rehearse in preparation for a public performance and utilise composition and recording technology to develop their individual performance and composition skills.
- Students explore contemporary composition techniques through the use of Soundtrap, Musescore, and multi-track recording.
- Throughout the year, aural, theory and musicianship skills will be developed.

The skills learnt in the course will support and enhance the learning that occurs in the Extra Curricular Music Program at St Margaret's.

LEARNING EXPERIENCES IN THE ARTS - MUSIC

Music will provide the opportunity for:

- Playing musical instruments, composing, analysing and investigating music
- Creativity, imagination, technical ability, aesthetic appreciation, critical thinking and self confidence
- Developing skills in the use of innovative arts practices and technologies to express ideas
- Building aesthetic knowledge and communication: valuing and sharing arts experiences
- Discovering insights into local, national and global cultures and arts traditions

ASSESSMENT

- Responding, Knowledge and Understanding – Musicianship skills
- Creating - Composition
- Presenting – Performance (Individual and Group)
- Reflecting

THE ARTS – Visual Art

COURSE OVERVIEW

The Year 8 Visual Art Course develops students' understanding of the visual world by making and appreciating images and objects. An understanding of the skills of artists, designers, craftspeople, critics and historians is developed. Emphasis is placed on experimentation and an enjoyment of the art making process. Students experience the work of talented artists first-hand by working with artists in workshop situations.

TOPICS OF STUDY

Visual Art challenges students to use skills, techniques, processes and materials to plan and create personalised Visual Art works. Students refine, reflect upon and display their resolved work. Practical work is underpinned by research to understand and evaluate visual imagery using art terminology in Responding tasks.

Students will explore art concepts and ideas which relate to their own backgrounds and experience within the unit focus: IDENTIKIT. Media and processes explored may include painting, printmaking, digital processes and sculpture using mixed media or clay.

- Portrait painting on canvas. Students devise and photograph a self-portrait which is digitally manipulated. The image is further refined using stencilling, spray and masking techniques, expressive and detailed paint applications. Drawing. Students analyse the work of artists who specialise in detailed drawing. Students consider animal traits that link to who they are and who they wish to represent. Objective drawing exercises are developed into a complete drawn piece which students display for audiences and must justify the creative decisions made in the process of developing finished work.
- 3D Sculpture. Students devise and construct a 3D form made from natural and recycled materials incorporating surface textures and designs. The work of Tjanpi Desert Weavers will be referenced, and students will research these artists of influence.

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- Painting and portrait drawing, digital and mixed media 3D explorations, printmaking techniques
- Making, presenting and reflecting on art works that incorporate Visual Art techniques, technologies, processes and language
- Understanding and using the Elements and Principles of Art and Design in Responding tasks
- Researching and evaluating the practices of local and international artists in relation to students' own ideas
- Evaluating and reflecting on art works in Responding and theory tasks

ASSESSMENT

Work will be assessed using the following schema: Making and Responding. Two tasks are undertaken each semester: A Preliminary folio and a Major folio.

- Visual Journal preliminary work and documentation of individual concepts and practical activities
- Painting on canvas
- Drawing on paper
- 3D Sculptural form
- Analyse art works using visual arts language

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