

Lower School Curriculum at Robert May's School – Information for Parents

The core principle behind the Robert May's curriculum is that all students are given the opportunity to thrive. By experiencing a mixture of traditional classroom, creative, performing and technical subjects throughout Years 7-9, we believe that all students are able to make informed choices for Years 10-11 and beyond. We do not 'stream' students at any stage and, where subjects are taught in ability sets, there are several opportunities during the year to move which have no bearing on groupings in other subjects.

At Robert May's School we are committed to supporting the needs of all our students. Students who are deemed as disadvantaged** are supported through an inclusive support package in the curriculum. Some students who are disadvantaged are also SEND/Pupil Premium and the funding we receive through these areas is specifically deployed to help support the needs of disadvantaged students. Other students do not receive funding in this way, however we work with our staff and our parents to help develop the achievement, the aspirations and the destination paths for these students, as we do for all students.

Transition from Primary to Secondary

During Year 5 and 6 we work closely with our feeder primary schools to ensure that the transition from primary to secondary is as smooth as possible. There is a dual focus on both pastoral and academic transition which happens as follows:

When?	What Happens?
Summer Term Year 5	Whole School Open Day – led by teachers and students
Autumn Term Year 6	Open mornings for parents guided by Leadership team and students
Christmas Year 6	Year 6 students in feeder schools invited to see the School Production
Spring Term Year 6	Places allocated, formal information sharing begins
Summer Term Year 6	Head of Year, Deputy Head and SENCO visit primary schools 2 taster days where students are taught by RMS teachers Parents' Information evening RMS receive SAT scores or equivalent

In order that we can set the most appropriate targets and maintain the highest aspirations for all of our students, we use SAT results, information from Year 6 teachers and baseline Cognitive Ability Testing (CATs).

Curriculum Structure – Lower School

The Lower School Curriculum at Robert May's school is designed to extend and develop key themes from Key Stage 2 and give students the skills and knowledge required to be GCSE ready. All students are given the chance to find the subjects they enjoy most and in which they can have the most success.

In Year 7, the majority of subjects are taught to a mixed ability tutor group of approximately 30 students. Students study one modern language which they follow through into year 8 and 9. Allocation of language in year 7 is arbitrary.

The focus of the RMS curriculum is on developing good study skills and giving students the opportunity to study a broad and balanced range of familiar and new subjects. In Years 8 and 9,

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tutor groups are mixed together in half year group ‘blocks’ so that students come into contact with a greater proportion of their peers.

Students receive 30 lessons per week in 45 or 50 minute periods. In Year 7, baseline testing is carried out in maths to inform ability sets. Similarly, the first term is used in PE to determine ability sets. Regular assessment in all subjects is carried out to ensure that students the level of teaching matches the needs of the individual. Progress is reported to parents on a termly basis.

For September 2018, the breakdown of subjects in Years 7-9 is as follows:

Subject	Weekly Lessons			
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Structure
English	4	4	4	Single lessons in mixed ability groups
Maths	4	4	4	Single lessons in ability sets
Science	3	3	3	1 double & 1 single in mixed ability groups
PE	3	3	3	Single lessons in ability sets
Music/Drama	2	1	2*	3 classes formed from 2 tutor groups
Art	1	2	2*	3 classes formed from 2 tutor groups
Foreign Languages	3	2	3	Single lessons in one of French, German or Spanish
Geography	2	2	2	Single lessons in mixed ability groups
History	2	2	2	Single lessons in mixed ability groups
RE	1	2	2	Single lessons in mixed ability groups
Design & Technology	2	2	2*	1 double lesson as 3 classes formed from 2 tutor groups
Computing and ICT	2	2	2*	1 double lesson as 3 classes formed from 2 tutor groups
Citizenship	1	1	1	Single lesson taught as a mixed ability tutor group

Double periods are in place for some subjects to make best use of practical facilities or specialist spaces.

*Subjects included in Year 8 ‘Mini-Options’ process

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Curriculum Options

At the end of year 7:

In 2018/19 Robert May's will be trialling a model for delivering a second Modern Foreign Language to able linguists when they move from Year 7 to Year 8.

In the Summer term of year 8:

Students are asked to make choices about a number of courses they will cover when they enter Year 9. Firstly, those with a keen interest and ability in science may opt to begin GCSE Triple Science from the start of Year 9. Secondly, all students choose three subjects from Art, Computing, Music/Drama and Technology through a 'Mini-Options' process.

In the Spring term of year 9:

Students being to choose which subjects they will continue to study at GCSE in addition to the core of English, Maths, Science, Ethics, Citizenship and PE.

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