

Year 7 Autumn Curriculum Update - September 2026

YEAR 7 AUTUMN TERM OVERVIEW

Welcome Year 7 students to your first term at Brooklands Academy. We are so excited to have you and your family join our community.

2026 has been a huge year for us so far. Not only did we de-amalgamate from Walton High, but we also won Most Inspiring Secondary School of 2026, achieved the ARC Bronze Award and the Woodland Trust Gold Award.

As we begin our new exciting chapter as Brooklands Academy, our values of A Place to Belong, A Place to Learn and A Place to Achieve are at the forefront of everything we have been working hard to embed into our school, staff, students and community with us continuing to look at ways to improve communication, teaching and learning within our classrooms, consistency and building connections with Tutors.

A new year always means a chance for reinvention. Reinvention starts by taking chances. We encourage our students to approach September with the mindset of saying yes! We want to support our young people in taking calculated risks so that they can thrive in school and beyond. The yes might be to a new enrichment activity, a challenge within the classroom or to a new friend! Saying yes to something new is saying yes to personal growth!

Welcome to the new academic year, let's do this!

All the Progress Leaders at Brooklands Academy

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Working with the theme of Discovery, this term students will be developing their creative writing and their comprehension and inference reading skills. In the first half term, students will exploring both physical and emotional discoveries through their writing. They will learn how to build interesting characters, create settings and develop a narrative using a range of language techniques.

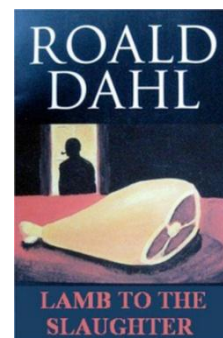
In the second half term, students will focus on analysing how other writers have described their personal discoveries. We will look at both the language and structural devices they have used to express the writer's thoughts and feelings clearly. This will include learning how to write an accurate response with evidence from the text.



ENGLISH LITERATURE

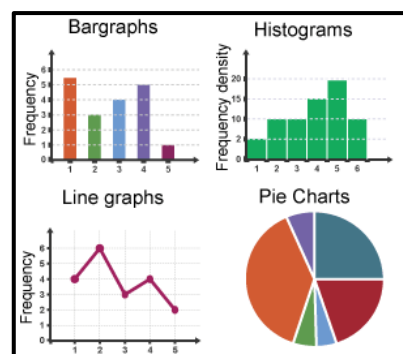
Working with the theme of Detectives students are currently studying the Roald Dahl short story 'Lamb to the Slaughter'. This intriguing tale of family relationships, police investigation and domestic murder have students enthusiastically debating themes such as responsibility in relationships, crime, and the death penalty.

With so many different opinions in the class, everyone is keen to present their ideas on whether killer Mary was a victim as well as a villain – and no one will ever look at a leg of lamb in the same way again! Later on in the term, students build on their understanding of the genre and explore a range of writing to analyse how conventions of language and structure are used for effect.



MATHS

In Year 7, students begin their Key Stage 3 mathematics journey by developing a strong foundation in number, algebra, and statistics. During the autumn term, students are introduced to key algebraic concepts, including sequences, algebraic notation, substitution, expressions, and simple equations. These topics help students recognise patterns, use mathematical language accurately, and develop confidence in representing and solving problems using algebra. Alongside algebra, students strengthen their understanding of number through work on place value, ordering and rounding, and the four operations. These essential skills support fluency and accuracy in calculation and provide a secure basis for more advanced mathematical study. Students also learn how estimation can be used to check the reasonableness of answers and solve problems efficiently.



The term also introduces students to statistical concepts through the study of averages and range, enabling them to collect, interpret, and analyse data. Throughout the curriculum, students are encouraged to explain their reasoning, apply their knowledge in a variety of contexts, and develop confidence in tackling increasingly challenging mathematical tasks. This broad and balanced programme provides a strong foundation for future success in mathematics.

SCIENCE

During the autumn term, pupils will begin their science learning with an introductory unit designed to build confidence, curiosity, and safe working habits in the laboratory. A key focus of this unit will be learning how to use Bunsen burners safely and effectively. Pupils will be taught how to set up equipment correctly, adjust the flame, and identify the different types of flames used for heating. Alongside this, they will develop a strong understanding of essential health and safety rules in the lab, including the correct use of protective equipment, safe handling of materials, and responsible behaviour during practical work. Students will also be introduced to a range of common laboratory equipment, such as measuring cylinders, thermometers, and test tubes, learning both their names and how to use them accurately.



They will practise planning and carrying out simple scientific investigations, focusing on skills such as making observations, recording results, and drawing basic conclusions. At the end of this introductory unit, pupils will complete an assessment to check their understanding of key concepts and practical skills. Following this, pupils will move on to subject-specific topics in Biology and Chemistry. In Biology, they will study plant and animal cells, learning about their structure and functions, and how different types of cells are adapted for their roles. In Chemistry, they will explore the concepts of mixing and dissolving, investigating how substances combine and how solutions are formed.

ART

In Year 7 Art, students begin an exciting exploration of creativity through a broad range of artistic styles, techniques, and processes. This year, the theme is “Journeys” encouraging students to reflect on the stories we tell through the things we play with, the cultures we grow up in, the places we visit, and the people who influence our lives.

Students learn about key art movements and discover how artists communicate ideas and respond to the world around them. Alongside this, they develop important skills including drawing from life, gridding for accuracy, painting, and basic photography. A strong focus is placed on the Formal Elements of Art—line, tone, shape,



texture, composition, form, and colour which helps students build confidence in analysing and discussing artwork using specific art vocabulary.

Homework projects are designed to reinforce classroom learning and support students' creative growth. Throughout the year, students develop their abilities by:



Developing ideas through artist research, focusing on observational drawing and tonal work,

Refining ideas by experimenting with mark-making, materials, and tonal techniques.

Recording ideas through detailed observational studies that emphasize tone and texture.

Presenting a personal response in carefully structured sketchbooks and personal final piece.

Art is taught as part of a creative rotation alongside Food Technology and Design Technology, allowing students to experience a variety of creative disciplines. Within the art rotation, projects directly link to the overarching "Journeys" theme, focusing on toys and culture to explore personal and shared stories through art.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

In this term, students are developing a strong foundation in Computer Science by exploring both the physical and digital aspects of technology. They learned how to access and navigate key educational platforms such as Microsoft Teams, CSUK Academy, and other online learning tools that supported their studies.



A key focus of the unit was e-safety. Students were taught how to stay safe online by understanding the risks associated with internet use, such as cyberbullying, phishing, and data privacy concerns. They explored practical strategies for protecting their personal information and behaving responsibly in digital environments.

Students also investigated the world of computer hardware, gaining an understanding of the essential components that make up a computer system. They examined how hardware had evolved over time—from the enormous, room-sized machines of the early computing era to today's incredibly compact and powerful microchips that can fit on the tip of a finger. This historical perspective helped them appreciate the rapid pace of technological advancement and its impact on everyday life.

DANCE

Year 7 begin their Dance journey with Dancing Through the Decades, exploring key dance styles and movements from different historical periods. Students learn about each decade's context, develop basic performance skills, and build confidence in collaboration and teamwork. The unit concludes with a group performance combining the movements they have learned. Performing Arts also offers a range of extracurricular opportunities, including Dance Company, Drama Club, and our annual School Musical, alongside many other performance opportunities at Brooklands. Speak to a Performing Arts teacher if you would like to get involved!



DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

In Year 7, Design Technology students begin by designing and constructing a mobile phone holder using manufactured board. This project introduces them to essential workshop tools, materials, and the creative design process that underpins the subject. For those keen to develop their skills further, a DT club is available for Key Stage 3 students at Brookland's. Interested students should speak to their teacher for more information.



DRAMA



Year 7 students will be welcomed into the Performing Arts department through their first topic, Welcome to Drama and Pantomime! In this unit, we will be exploring the 'basics' of Drama and what makes a good performance. Through scripted scenes and work created by the students themselves, this will be the start of all students exploring their physical and expressive skills. There are a whole range of exciting enrichment opportunities in Performing Arts! Year 7 are encouraged to audition for our upcoming annual musical, as well as the opportunity to join our Encore Dance Company for all years and experiences and Drama Club!

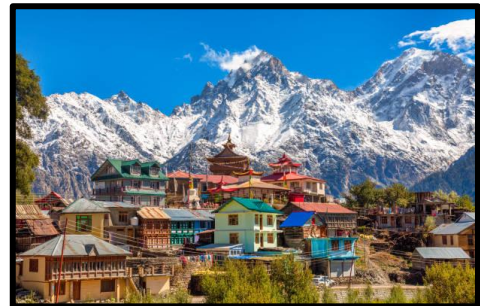
FOOD AND NUTRITION

Students will develop a range of essential cooking skills by preparing a variety of dishes, including dippy divers, bruschetta, fruit salad, and fruit crumble. Throughout the course rotation, students will practise key techniques such as chopping, mixing, assembling, and presenting food. A strong emphasis will be placed on food safety and hygiene, with students learning how to work safely and demonstrating these practices during each practical lesson. In addition, students will explore important food topics, including: • Food waste • Seasonality • Food miles • Healthy Eating Guidelines Students will also consider the environmental impact of food choices and begin to understand how their decisions can contribute to more sustainable eating habits.



GEOGRAPHY

In Key Stage 3 students' study 'place-themed' units, with a new part of the world focused on each term. We begin Year 7 looking at Milton Keynes and the rest of the United Kingdom. Students are enjoying exploring their local area – identifying what makes Milton Keynes a unique and exciting place in which to live.



Later in the term they will explore the physical geography of the country – looking at different landscapes and our climate before studying why rivers flood and how it can present a hazard to us.

Students with a desire to make a positive impact on their local community and an interest in environmental sustainability are encouraged to join the school's 'eco-committee' to review the impact we have on the environment and to support projects to mitigate it.

HISTORY

Year 7 students begin their History journey by developing key historical skills. These include understanding chronology, analysing historical sources and exploring different historical interpretations. The first unit, "Conquest, People and Society," examines a range of significant conflicts and their impact on society. Students study the Roman conquest of Britain, the struggle for the English throne in 1066, religious conflict during the Crusades, and the dispute between King John and the Barons that led to Magna Carta.



Throughout the year, students develop their historical writing skills through the use of PEE paragraphs (Point, Evidence, Explanation). This structured approach helps them to communicate

their ideas clearly and support their arguments with historical evidence. Students also explore historical debates and differing interpretations of events, helping them to understand that historians can hold different perspectives about the past and that history is often open to interpretation.

LANGUAGES

FRENCH

This half term, students will begin their French studies by learning common greetings, along with vocabulary related to nationalities, languages, and countries. They will also be introduced to numbers up to 31 and the months of the year, enabling them to say when their birthday is. As the term progresses, students will expand their vocabulary further by learning colours and animal names, which will help them describe their pets in French. These foundational topics are designed to build confidence and enthusiasm for language learning in an engaging and accessible way.



GERMAN



In German this term the students are studying German phonics, classroom language, introductions and greetings, personality descriptions, family and pets vocabulary. They will focus on pronunciation and speaking, as well as writing skills. They will learn how to complete dictation and reading aloud activities and have their first experiences of reading and listening in German.

MANDARIN

This term, students will begin an exciting journey into the world of Mandarin and Chinese culture. They will learn the basics of Chinese characters (Hanzi) and pronunciation through Pinyin, while developing the confidence to introduce themselves, talk about their families, and use numbers in everyday situations. Along the way, they will explore fascinating Chinese traditions, festivals, and beliefs, gaining valuable cultural insights and a deeper understanding of different perspectives from around the world.

什么 shén me what	谁 shéi who	谁的 shuí de whose
哪里 nǎ lǐ where	哪个 nǎ ge which	怎么 zěn me how
什么时候 shén me shí hòu when	为什么 wèi shén me why	多少 duō shǎo how many

SPANISH

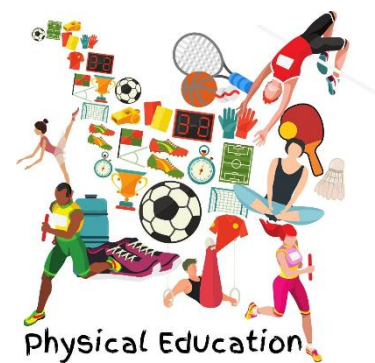
SPANISH GREETINGS AND FAREWELLS



Students will learn how to introduce themselves and give basic personal details, such as age, birthdays, and number of siblings. There will be a narrow focus on phonics and grammar accuracy. Students will take part in a variety of speaking and listening activities in order to grow their confidence and spontaneity.

PE

We're looking forward to an exciting start to PE this Autumn! Students in the Girls PE Groups will take part in Netball, Basketball and Table Tennis, learning the key skills, rules and tactics of each sport while developing confidence, teamwork and game awareness. Students in the Boys PE Groups will participate in Football, Tag Rugby and Health & Fitness, focusing on developing fundamental movement skills, coordination, balance, agility, passing, receiving and ball control. Within Health & Fitness, students will be introduced to the key components of fitness, including cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility and speed. They will learn how these components are tested and developed, as well as receive an induction to the fitness suite, allowing them to safely experience and understand how the equipment can support their physical development.



During the first two weeks, students will complete a range of baseline fitness and skills assessments. These assessments will help staff place students into appropriate groups, ensuring they are both supported and challenged at a level that matches their current stage of development. We also encourage students to get involved in our extracurricular clubs, including Netball, Basketball, Football and Fitness activities.

MUSIC



Students have been singing with confidence and enthusiasm. They have explored a range of vocal styles, including sea shanties, songs from musicals, and African music. They have also begun using key musical vocabulary linked to the elements of music and will continue to develop this through their exploration of rhythm and drumming. Many students have also joined the school choir to further develop their voices.

RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS

Understanding World Religions and Cults this term in Religion, Philosophy and Ethics, students will examine two key themes. To begin their Key Stage 3 journey, students will investigate Beliefs in the Local Community in order to establish the importance of identity, equality and diversity in and around Milton Keynes. Students will explore the beliefs and worldviews around them, which will support in their study of Ultimate Questions in the latter part of the term. At this point, students will have the opportunity to discover answers to life's big questions whilst engaging in a fun and creative class project. Students are invited to join the RPE Book Club - for more information, please speak to Mrs Cartwright!



CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Character Development equips students with the skills, knowledge and values needed to thrive in school and beyond and forms an important part of our Holistic Curriculum. This is a timetabled lesson that students do with their Form Tutor every Week A Wednesday, session two.

For the first half-term, students will be learning about Respect and how to show this in our community. They will be introduced to what we mean by respect; the difference between respectful and disrespectful behaviour, and the importance of showing kindness and empathy to others. To finish the first half-term, students will be studying anti-bullying and safe ways to address bullying in our school community, such as anti-bullying campaigns and speaking to a trusted adult.

The second half-term's theme for Character Development is Mental Health, whereby students will be understanding ways to develop self-esteem and emotional resilience and recognising what good mental health looks like.



On Friday 16th October, Year 7 will also be participating in Restart a Heart where representatives from South Central Ambulance Service will be joining us to teach students about life-saving skills, CPR and basic first aid.