



THE Leys  
CAMBRIDGE



YEAR 9 OPTIONS  
*at The Leys*

# A message from *the Director of Studies*



The main objective of the Year 9 curriculum is to ensure that pupils settle quickly and happily and make the transition Year 9 at The Leys successfully. The curriculum is broad so that all pupils experience a wide range of subjects and then make choices for GCSE from a position of knowledge. In this booklet you will be able to find out more about the various options available to pupils at Year 9.

I would encourage our current pupils to discuss the options with the Heads of Department, and there will be an opportunity for those joining us at Year 9 to do so at the 24-hour visit at the beginning of the Easter break.

**Mr O E Peck**  
Director of Studies

## *Choosing your options*

All pupils study: English, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History, Geography, Divinity, a Modern Foreign Language (French, German, or Spanish) and choose:

| One Additional Language    | One Classical                   | Three Creative                |
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\*Computer Science and Computing cannot be taken together.

# French

## Head of Department: Mr S Leader

The French course in Year 9 at The Leys assumes at least a year or two of existing knowledge of the language. We adopt a communicative approach with plenty of each lesson conducted in French. We encourage pupils to “decode” texts by working out the meaning of words thanks to their context. We cover quite a lot of grammar in Year 9 so that you hit the ground running at the start of the GCSE course. There are also plenty of opportunities in the course to discover francophone countries and cultures from around the world.

We cover the following topics and grammar:

- Exchanging personal information (present tense verbs, including reflexive verbs)
- Describing friends and family members (adjectives)
- Exploring the main sights and monuments of Paris (the perfect tense)
- Talking about hobbies and leisure activities (the imperfect tense)
- Understanding information about school life in France (aller+infinitif)
- Finding out about the Futuroscope theme park (future simple)

# German

## Head of Department: Mrs J Bridstrup

The core German course in Year 9 at The Leys assumes at least a year of existing knowledge of the language or there is the option to take it as a new language\*. We adopt a communicative approach with plenty of each lesson conducted in German. There is an expectation for pupils to communicate in German with their peers and with their teachers in the lesson where possible. We encourage pupils to “decode” texts by working out the meaning of words thanks to their context and to engage with recorded material to develop listening skills. We cover all the basics of grammar in Year 9 to prepare for the demands of the IGCSE course. There are also plenty of opportunities to develop cultural awareness of the German-speaking countries.

We cover the following topics and grammar:

- Core German (continuing from Year 8):
- Discussing what you eat, eating out, buying food and healthy eating (present tense, modal verbs and adjectives)
- Talking about holidays and leisure activities (the perfect tense and the imperfect tense)
- Discussing daily life and describing your home now and in the future (present tense, including separable and reflexive verbs, prepositions and the future tense)
- Making plans (modal verbs)
- Expressing your opinion about clothes and shopping (adjectives, the future tense and the perfect tense)

Beginners German:

- Basic greetings, personal information, phonics, alphabet, numbers
- My world – family and friends
- Free time
- School

\*It is important to note that the make-up of the German provision in the 'Additional Language' block will be flexible, depending on the previous linguistic experience and abilities of those choosing it, and timetable restrictions.

# Spanish

**Head of Department: Mrs L Reyes**

The Spanish course in Year 9 at The Leys suits both beginners and non beginners students. The syllabus taught is the same, but tailored to the level of the students. We teach a range of topics and grammatical areas which give a strong foundation from which to build the students' level of use and understanding of Spanish language and culture. The cultural and gastronomic events we organise play an important role in helping the students discover more from the Hispanic world. Some of the events the students engage in are; cinema day, a cooking class and several lessons based on hispanic festivals. It is an excellent opportunity to broaden your horizons and think about using your linguistic skills beyond the curriculum by taking part in competitions and thinking about future careers and job prospects. Studying Spanish opens up future possibilities to study or work in Spanish speaking countries across the world.

## Core Topics

- Introductions
- Family
- Films
- Daily Routine
- Chores
- Food

\*It is important to note that the make-up of the Spanish provision in the 'Additional Language' block will be flexible, depending on the previous linguistic experience and abilities of those choosing it, and timetable restrictions.



# Greek

**Head of Department: Mrs C Drinkwater**

Strong linguists or those with systematic, methodical minds who like a challenge will enjoy what Greek has to offer. Decoding and grappling with a brand new alphabet and a grammatical system similar to Latin make Greek an ideal choice for those who have enjoyed their study of Latin previously (although no prior knowledge of Latin or Greek is required). Studying Greek also affords pupils the opportunity to learn about the culture, history and society of the ancient Greek period through reading stories and passages in Greek. An option for those particularly interested in the classical world or those who are intellectually curious wanting to try something new and a bit different!

We follow the John Taylor Greek to GCSE course, which builds up understanding from very basic transliteration of English words into Greek letters to gain comfort and familiarity with Greek letters all the way to reading longer passages of continuous Greek in the form of stories from history, literature and mythology. Grammatical concepts and vocabulary are embedded with regular games, tests, quizzes and class competitions like Blooket and Quizlet live. There are also opportunities to explore the civilisation aspect of Greek culture through research projects and presentations which allow pupils to show their creativity.



# Classical Civilisation

## Head of Department: Mrs C Drinkwater

Classical Civilisation is a good option for pupils who have enjoyed learning about the culture and society of the Romans in their Latin lessons but do not want to continue learning the language. Classical Civilisation is an ideal choice for those with a keen interest in the literature and history of the ancient world and those who enjoy other humanities subjects such as History or Geography. This is a standalone course produced in house by our own Leys Classics department, so it is a great introduction to the classical world if you have not studied any Classics previously or if you want to focus on the historical, analytical and interpretive side of Classics rather than the linguistic or translation based skills which the study of Latin and Greek provides. There is no requirement to have studied any Classics before.

We spend the first half term building familiarity with the archaic Greek society of the Minoans at Knossos, looking at the intersection between myth and reality through the myth of the Minotaur. We then move to a term on a retelling of Homer's epic poem the Iliad, War with Troy. We listen to an audio dramatisation of the War with Troy story and study the plot, characters and impact through creative activities, essays, comprehension questions and discussions. After this we have our Independent Research Project which allows pupils a choice of historical periods and figures to investigate themselves, building research, library and information synthesis skills. We finish the year with an introduction to ancient Persia in preparation for the Ancient History GCSE (although it is not necessary to have taken Classical Civilisation in Year 9 to take up Ancient History for GCSE).

# Latin

## Head of Department: Mrs C Drinkwater

If you have enjoyed your study of Latin previously this is an excellent reason to continue! Latin in Year 9 will appeal to those who have enjoyed learning about the language and culture of the Romans thus far. Carrying on with Latin enables you to develop fluency and build great complexity into your translations and keeps options open for studying Latin or a non-linguistic classical subject later on. Ideal for anyone interested in the classical Roman world wanting to combine their study of the language and culture of the ancient Romans. You need to have studied Latin for at least one year in order to take Latin in Year 9 at The Leys.

We study Suburani, following the story of Sabina and her friends old and new across new places in the Roman empire, starting in Ostia and travelling to Arelate in Roman France and ending up in Lusitania, ancient Portugal. Through the stories of Suburani we add more complex grammar and vocabulary to the foundation you have already built in your Latin lessons, which we practise through regular games, vocabulary tests and class quizzes using Blooket and Quizlet live. We also do a half termly civilisation based project on such topics as Roman baking, mining and marriage to give a flavour of culture and society as well.



# Computer Science

## Head of Department: Mr T Fung

Computer Science has rapidly become central to our daily lives and requires everyone to understand at least some of the basics on how these machines and programs work. For those that are interested in taking this further, Computer Science at Year 9 will offer an introduction to stepping into this industry and explore some of the core elements of this subject. Pupils will acquire proficiency in analysing, critically assessing, and making informed decisions about many key aspects of software and computers. This is a great starting point for GCSE Computer Science and beyond.

This course covers a comprehensive range of topics, including Python programming, data representation, components of computer systems and wider knowledge that supports the roles of computer systems and their users. The curriculum also emphasises awareness of emerging computing trends, ethical considerations, and the impact of technology on individuals, society, and the environment. Additionally, students learn problem decomposition and analysis, as well as building up confidence to read, write and design programmes and to refine, and evaluate them. Computer Science and Computing cannot be taken together.

# Computing

## Head of Department: Mr T Fung

Computing is a highly imaginative field that blends innovation and enthusiasm, enabling students to develop their skills to use computer systems with more confidence and explore the different pathways relating to computers. This course emphasises computational thinking, system design, and grasping the capabilities of the different applications computers have to offer, allowing pupils to develop proficiency in using computer systems. Pupils that want to develop their life skills and explore what Computers can accomplish, are encouraged to take this course, which is a great starting point for both the GCSE ICT and GCSE Computer Science courses.

This course covers a comprehensive range of topics, including programming, core concepts of computer systems, Logical thinking, Desktop application skills, Image editing and many more. The curriculum also emphasises awareness of emerging computing trends, ethical considerations, and the impact of technology on individuals, society, and the environment. Additionally, students have the opportunity to develop their logical reasoning skills. Computer Science and Computing cannot be taken together.



# Design and Technology

## Head of Department: Mr C Battle

Design Technology is a creative subject that allows you to exercise your imagination by problem solving, designing and making. You will learn how to represent your ideas graphically by experimenting with different drawing styles. You'll be able to take your drawings and make the products you have designed. In Year 9 you will do a series of projects that will introduce you to designing in wood, metal and plastics. Each project will teach you the technical principles of working with these materials and the course is focused mainly on practical activities. Teachers will support you in developing practical skills using a range of hand tools and also computer aided manufacturing systems such as a laser printer and CNC router. You will start with a silversmithing project, where you will design and make some Jewellery. You will also learn how to use an industrial standard Computer Aided Design software called Solidworks. A major Year 9 project involves designing a boat in Solidworks, making the boat using computer aided manufacture and finally testing the speed of the boat in our own water filled test tank. The Year 9 course is a broad curriculum where you will learn by doing practical activities. It is a foundation for further study at GCSE if you feel this could be a pathway for you in future.



# Music

## Head of Department: Mr M Kenworthy

The Year 9 Music course is all about exposing pupils to a variety of different styles of music in a practical, exciting, and interesting way. The year is split into five mini projects which include Music for TV and Film, Sampling and Looping on Garageband and creating cover versions. In each project we work on the three main skill areas in Music: Performing, Listening and Composing (mostly using GarageBand) so it is the perfect option if you enjoy playing or listening to music. The course provides a good grounding for pupils interested in studying Music for GCSE.

### Topics covered:

- Music for TV and Film: pupils have the opportunity to compose short extracts to accompany a clip.
- Introduction to GarageBand: pupils learn how to use samples, loops and mix tracks to create a song in style of their own choosing.
- Jazz and Blues: pupils learn how to play a simple 12-bar blues. Extension tasks can include improvisation and altered chords.
- Minimalism: pupils learn about the concept and explore works culminating in a class performance of Terry Riley's 'In C'.
- Band project: cover versions: pupils work in groups to produce a cover version of a popular song.

# Art

## Head of Department: Mrs J Hebden

Pupils who demonstrate ingenuity, creativity and independence will enjoy our challenging and fast paced Year 9 Art lessons. This year is a preparation for GCSE study and forms a foundation of understanding in drawing, exploring contextual references and understanding how to combine source material into original and insightful personal resolutions.

Understanding the visual world around us has never been more important in a world where being visually literate is a core contemporary life skill. Enhancing your visual literacy can help to facilitate a broader GCSE selection of subjects or even lead to creative careers in, for example, graphic design and publishing, curating, game design or animation.

You make your Year 9 Art project about your own personally selected theme. It could be about anything that interests you: food, crystals, cars or the ancient Greeks, to name a few possibilities.

You research and explore your idea through four main areas of research:

- Drawing and photography
- Experimenting with print, paint and 3D possibilities
- Exploring Artists and Designers
- Resolving your idea into an ambitious final piece

# Drama

## Head of Department: Mr J Johnson

Drama at Year 9 allows for the exploration of both acting and theatre design. Pupils will have the opportunity to specialise in stage lighting, sound, costume or set or as a performer. The majority of lessons will take place in our black box theatre studio and will be practical based lessons exploring a range of skills to help you to develop not only as a performer of theatre but as a director and designer as well. Choose this subject if you enjoy practical, hands on, creative work that is fun and engaging and helps you to develop your ability to work independently and with others.

In the first term, Year 9 will explore the elements that make up dramatic tension, looking at the play/film 'The Woman in Black' and various elements of creating suspense in Drama. This will lead to a project where pupils will create, act, film and edit their own movie thriller trailer. In the second term, pupils will explore elements of physical theatre, mask and comedy learning how to use lifts and movement in creating their work. Finally, in the Summer Term, pupils will explore a play text, where they will approach a scene, either as an actor, director or theatre designer.





# Sport Science and PE

## Head of Department: Mr B Elston

Physical Education in Year 9 is a dynamic, exciting subject which enables pupils to develop their physical techniques and fitness levels, along with problem solving, leadership and communication skills. A broad range of activities are facilitated which complement the Games programme and offer pupils the opportunity to try new sports, such as basketball, handball, trampolining and more. Pupils also gain valuable life skills by completing units in 'Personal Survival' and 'Health Related Fitness'. Although there is no theoretical content in Year 9 PE, key concepts from the GCSE Physical Education course are introduced through the various practical activities. Above all, Physical Education in Year 9 aims to inspire a lifelong participation in physical activity by giving all pupils a positive and enjoyable experience.



