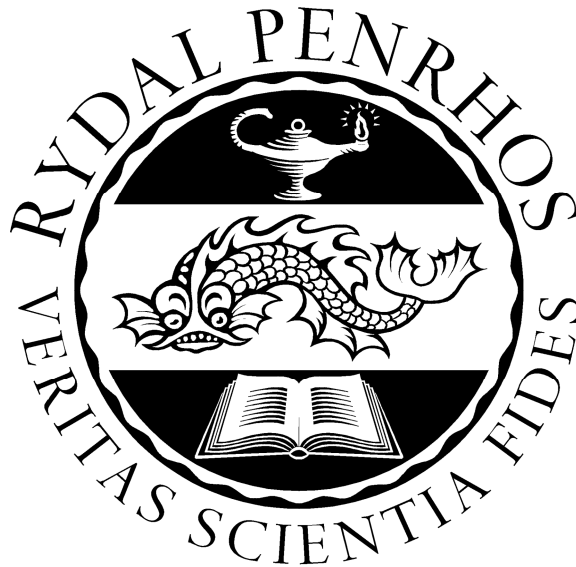


YEARS 7-9 CURRICULUM BOOKLET
ACADEMIC YEAR 2011/12



The latest version of this booklet is available in electronic form on our website at:

www.rydalpenrhos.com/academic/senior_school_curriculum

Contents

Page 3.	Introduction
Page 4.	The Lower School, Tutorial & House systems, Academic Monitoring and Reporting
Page 5.	Prep, Extra Tuition, and Learning Support
Page 6.	English as a Foreign Language, Careers, LRC, and ICT
Page 7.	PSHE and Chapel life
Page 8.	The Extra-curriculum
Page 9.	The Academic curriculum
Page 10.	The Timetable

The Lower School

Thank you for taking an interest in the Lower School at Rydal Penrhos. This booklet seeks to set out some of the opportunities that are on offer. It contains a great deal of information and I recommend that you spend time considering all the options available to you.

Rydal Penrhos School is a school for pupils from age 3 to 18: Years 7-9 sit in the middle of this programme, bridging a gap from primary schooling to the public examinations of GCSE and beyond. Year 6 to 7 is a significant break point in a child's schooling, but it need not be traumatic. We aim to quickly settle our pupils in to the routines and demands of a senior school. More opportunities and greater challenge are gradually introduced in the Lower School. Specialist teachers are used at every stage and we aim at this stage to inspire a love of learning. We consistently demonstrate excellent 'value-added', results above those that might have been expected, from our pupils. Furthermore, Rydal Penrhos offers a pastoral support structure which will nurture and encourage all pupils in all areas of their school lives.

Good luck with your decision making and please do not hesitate to contact me if there are any questions.

Julian Noad
Deputy Head (Academic)
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The Lower School

Years 7, 8 & 9 are the three foundation year groups of our Lower School (years 7-11). Mrs Irene Proudlove is in overall charge of the Lower School and will coordinate tutor groups as well as dealing with pastoral issues in years 7 to 11.

From September 2011, Years 7 and 8 will be looked after in a special Junior day base, manned by form tutors and a Day Matron. This area will provide social interaction and increased pastoral care opportunities. It will also be the supervised drop-off and pick-up point for Years 7 & 8, allowing flexibility for busy parents.

Year 9 pupils will use their House day base, which will provide a similar opportunity, as well as developing house loyalty and belonging.

The Tutorial and House systems

Each pupil is allocated to a registration group on arrival and new pupils are allocated a house within the first month of term. The house system involves four competitive Houses; Morgan, Osborn, Payne or Wesley. Pupils remain in their competitive house for the duration of their time in the School. Each House has a member of staff appointed as Head of House, and members of the Upper Sixth are appointed as house prefects. In addition, day pupils are linked to a boarding House, so that they might join in with activities, particularly at the weekends, and have the opportunity to stay overnight if necessary at any time.

The tutor is the corner-stone of each pupil's school career in the sense that it is the tutor's responsibility to oversee the academic, career, personal and social development of their tutees. A strong relationship between tutor and tutee is a major focus. Parents are encouraged to use the tutor as their first point of contact in all matters.

Academic Monitoring and Reporting

In years 7-9, pupils are awarded grades for effort and achievement at approximately four-week intervals. These grades are discussed with tutors who will give praise and encouragement or suggest strategies for improvement, as appropriate. In some cases, where they are falling behind, pupils will be placed on Report to give more information about their progress between grades.

The tutor is responsible for the academic and pastoral welfare of pupils in their tutor group. Regular reviews and individual interviews, together with internal monitoring mechanisms, ensure that concerns raised are communicated quickly and effectively.

The tutor is normally the first point of contact, either via the planner or through a phone call or email. Subject teachers, Heads of Department, the Head of Lower School, the Deputy Head (Academic), Deputy Head and Headmaster are also available and can be contacted as appropriate.

There are currently four formal reporting points in the year. Each pupil receives two full reports, at the end of the autumn term and summer term (end of spring term for year 7), as well as short reports at October half term and at the end of the spring term (at the end of the summer term for year 7). There is a Parents' Evening for each year group at least once a year and, additionally, early in the first term there is a 'Meet the Tutor evening'.

Prep

Prep is an important part of the academic development of pupils; it must therefore be a worthwhile exercise. Prep is set each evening and recorded by pupils in their planners. Except for English and Mathematics, prep is not set for the next day. In year 7, pupils should expect up to three preps each evening, each lasting no more than 20 minutes. Prep set by subject teachers can include tasks that need completion for the next lesson or extended tasks that may take a longer period of time. Teachers take care to plan differentiated preps; this may be by task, ability or outcome. In any case, pupils are only expected to spend the appropriate allocated time on a prep. If this time is reached, no matter whether the task has been completed or not, Houseparents or parents may write a comment to acknowledge that the appropriate period of time has been spent on the piece of work. As pupils move through the school, in order to develop good time management, planning and independent learning skills, pupils may be set a piece of work which extends over a greater period of time.

Extra Tuition

Teachers willingly make themselves available to pupils outside of lessons, on an ad hoc basis and for no charge. It is not normally necessary for pupils to receive regular additional tuition outside the curriculum. However, the School can usually make arrangements where appropriate for external tutors to support the needs of a pupil in a particular subject. There is a charge for such provision.

Learning Support (LS)

Pupils requiring Learning Support will normally have been identified, and may already be receiving support, before joining the School. Where possible, parents are asked to ensure they have met the Head of Learning Support before their son or daughter joins the School, and to make available any documentation, such as Educational Psychologist Assessments. Documents held by previous schools will be transferred as part of our normal liaison procedures to ensure satisfactory transfer and a proper continuity of support teaching.

Where pupils have not previously been identified, or have been identified only through screening procedures, a full assessment can be arranged. In order to receive extra time in examinations, or other consideration from Examination Boards, pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties will require a full assessment, and be able to provide evidence of continued support by the school. We will recommend an Educational Psychologist who charges a competitive fee. Parents may choose to use an external Educational Psychologist, but a useful report should include considerable liaison with the School.

Rydal Penrhos is committed to providing an appropriate and high quality education to all children. We believe that all children, including those who are identified as having special educational needs have a common entitlement to a broad and balanced academic and social curriculum, which is accessible to all of them, and to be fully included in all aspects of School life.

If a literacy or numeracy need has been identified prior to joining, or during their School life, pupils are offered support. This can present itself in two forms:

1. LS instead of a language option. In this way pupils will encounter a reduced curriculum and benefit from small group support where common themes of difficulty can be addressed or individual support of other curriculum areas delivered. There is no charge for this provision.
2. One-to-one support. Pupils may enjoy one-to-one or paired support for numeracy, literacy, or other need. All lessons are taught by specialist teachers who create and deliver individualized educational programmes through a multi sensory, cumulative approach. Lesson arrangements remain consistent throughout the year. Changes in the number of lessons only occur following discussion with teachers, parents and pupils. Parents are charged an additional fee for one-to-one or paired Learning Support provision. (See extra charges sheet)

Decisions regarding the allocation and timing of Learning Support lessons are based on a number of factors, which include the needs of the individual pupil, the wishes of the parent and pupil, as well as the views of the Learning Support Department, other relevant Heads of Departments and subject teacher(s).

English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

Pupils for whom English is not their first language will not always study the full range of subjects. A decision about their individual curriculum will be based on the results of the Placement Test that they sit when they first arrive in the school. As they move on up the school and as their language ability improves, their curriculum is reviewed by the Head of EFL in consultation with their tutor, Houseparent and the Deputy Head (Academic). Such decisions effectively become part of a needs analysis for each pupil, and the first principle of the EFL Department is to match teaching provision to the requirements of the individual pupil.

Pupils are encouraged to be as fully integrated as possible into mainstream subjects. In some cases, foreign pupils do not receive EFL lessons, either if parents have requested this, or it is felt that they can fully access the curriculum without the support of the Department. It is always possible for these pupils to be supported by the Department should the need arise. Pupils are generally allocated 4 core EFL lessons a week, in lieu of study of another language, depending on their level of English, and on how many mainstream subjects they take. There is no charge for these lessons.

When a pupil's entry into the school has been confirmed and if their level of English is considered to be weak, the school may require him or her to follow an intensive programme of English study. Following the Placement Test, the pupil's score is taken into consideration when deciding on what subjects he or she will be capable of studying. If further EFL support is required this can be arranged on a one-to-one or small group basis. There will be a charge in addition to the core EFL course for these more intensive lessons.

Careers

Careers guidance is offered from the outset through the PSHE programme.

Learning and Resource Centre (LRC)

New pupils joining Rydal Penrhos follow an induction programme and are shown how to make effective use of the LRC. Full time librarians operate from 9am to 5.30pm. As well as subject books, periodicals, journals and fiction books, the LRC has the ability to obtain other resources either by loaning from other resource institutions or through the internet. There is also a film and DVD collection available for loan. There is a computer suite, available to pupils during opening hours and a Sixth Form study area with Careers Section on the second floor. There is a quiet reading corner designed for small groups to read informally.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

All pupils are allocated a personal log-on code so that they are able to access the School's network. Workstations in ICT rooms and the LRC are available during the day. Wireless access is also provided in the boarding houses and in study areas of the School. An induction programme for new pupils to the School shows them how to use the School network safely and effectively. The network is protected with filters, and pupils are required to comply with the School's code of conduct for use of the School ICT systems.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)

Co-ordinated by the Head of PSHE, Mrs Mary Richardson, this programme is delivered primarily in a weekly lesson by a combination of a pupil's tutor and internal and external specialist staff. PSHE in years 7 to 9 helps pupils to lead confident, healthy and responsible lives as individuals and members of society. Through a range of activities across and beyond the curriculum, pupils gain practical knowledge and skills to help them live healthily and deal with the spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues they face as they approach adulthood. PSHE gives pupils opportunities to reflect on their experiences and how they are developing. It helps them to understand and manage responsibly a wider range of relationships as they mature, and to show respect for the diversity of, and differences between, people. It also develops pupils' well being and self-esteem, encouraging belief in their ability to succeed and enabling them to take responsibility for their learning and future choice of courses and career.

Chapel life

Rydal Penrhos is a Christian school with a Methodist Foundation. It has a full time Chaplain who is an ordained Methodist minister and is resident on the School campus. At its heart is a short daily act of worship or an assembly at the beginning of the day in St John's Church which is broadly Christian and which is led by a variety of staff, pupils, or visiting speakers from local churches. There are also regular voluntary Communion Services led by the Chaplain who also prepares candidates for the annual joint Anglican/Methodist Confirmation Service held in the summer term. In addition there are appropriate whole school services at Harvest, Remembrance Day, Christmas and Easter.

The Christian ethos of the School is expressed in the values of tolerance, respect and care towards all members of the community of whatever faith or culture from which they come. All are included in morning chapel. The School takes seriously its responsibility to foster spirituality across the curriculum and its commitment to sustainable development and global citizenship. It is always heartening to see our pupils respond to Charity Days and fund raising for a wide variety of good causes both local and overseas.

The Extra-curriculum

GAMES

Rydal Penrhos has a tradition of sporting excellence which current pupils respect and aspire to extend. Major team sports – rugby, hockey, netball and cricket – continue to provide local, regional and national recognition with many pupils achieving representative honours. Pupils achieve recognition for themselves and the School in individual sports such as tennis, swimming and athletics, at a regional as well as national level. In keeping with our position on the North Wales coast, we set great store by our success in sailing with many pupils representing the country and some achieving international acclaim. These opportunities are built on school team representation and opportunities for extended experiences at weekends or during holidays through expeditions and tours. In the past three years the School has taken sports tours to Australia, South Africa and Holland.

The main school games are:

Michaelmas term - Rugby for boys, Hockey for girls;

Lent term - Hockey and Sevens Rugby for boys, Netball for girls;

Summer term - Cricket for boys and Tennis for girls.

In addition to the main games, the following sports offer inter-school fixtures: athletics, fives, cross-country running, golf, sailing, skiing, squash and swimming. Rydal Penrhos also offers many opportunities to take part in recreational sport.

MUSIC

There is an eclectic mix of musical opportunities at Rydal Penrhos. As well as the orchestra, two choirs, various ensembles and bands, many pupils have individual instrumental lessons.

Ensemble Cymru enjoy a residency position at the School and perform ten concerts during the course of the year. Our pupils enjoy opportunities to play with and also develop their skills through workshops with these highly trained, professional, classical musicians.

DRAMA

Drama is to the fore at Rydal Penrhos. An excellent annual School Show is put on each Lent term, but there are numerous other smaller pieces staged throughout the year, including the inter-boarding house drama festival in the Michaelmas term.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD SCHEME

The DoE scheme is taught and many pupils undertake Bronze, Silver and ultimately Gold expedition work.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Rydal Penrhos offers a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities; from chess and drama clubs at lunchtimes through to Hut Camps in Snowdonia at weekends. Our aim is to offer something for everyone.

Day pupils are encouraged to join the Boarders' Weekend Activities programme which offers cultural trips to historic towns and cities, adventurous experiences such as paintballing or kite surfing and leisure outings including visits to shopping outlets, the cinema or ten pin bowling complex.

The School recognises its unique position geographically and we encourage pupils to experience the opportunities available in the Snowdonia National Park, on the sea and even at the City of Manchester Stadium watching Manchester City football club.

A community based project will see some of our Year 11 and Sixth Form pupils visit Uganda in June 2011 to support the development programme.

The Academic Curriculum

RATIONALE

Years 7 to 9 (Key Stage 3) is the bridge from Prep (or primary) schooling to GCSEs. The Rydal Penrhos academic curriculum keeps numeracy and literacy at its core with Mathematics and English to the fore. In addition, Science, practical and creative subjects and languages are introduced and developed. The Curriculum Summary document on the website demonstrates the progression.

Core

English Language	German
Mathematics	History
Science	Home Economics
Religious Studies	Information and Communications Technology (ICT)
Art	Learning Support (LS)
Design & Technology (DT)	Music
Drama	Physical Education (PE)
French	PSHE
Geography	

Options

English as a Foreign Language (EFL)	French/German (in Year 9)
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If interest exists, as part of the extra curriculum, it may be possible to study Welsh, with examination entry possible if sufficient progress is made. Similarly Latin will be available in the extra curriculum for Year 9 and above.

Practical and creative subjects are delivered on a carousel: half of the year with one subject; the second half on another. In this way longer lessons can be timetabled and the work can be more focused during its delivery time.

CHANGES FOR 2011

It has been felt for some time that the current provision of eighteen different subjects, including four languages, for Year 7 has been too much too soon. From September 2011, Modern Foreign Language study will build upon a good foundation of French in the Prep school. French, alone, will be offered in Year 7, settled to enable beginners and 'continuers' to be properly supported. In Year 8 a second language, German, will be introduced. Year 9 will require a language choice in preparation for the expectation of study of one MFL at GCSE level.

With regret, Latin will not be supported within the 2011 curriculum but opportunities will exist optionally in the extra-curriculum for Year 8 and above.

Welsh, which has been well developed in the Prep School, will no longer be taught as a separate subject in the academic curriculum of the Senior School. However, incidental Welsh and Welsh culture will be incorporated into the study of other subject areas. Welsh will continue to be offered in the extra curriculum, both as a Welsh Culture experience for all and optionally for those who want to further develop their understanding and/or wish to secure qualifications (both first and second language).

EFL will be offered in the curriculum (at no cost) for up to 4 periods per week as a language alternative. Further support (1:2:1 or small group) will be available and charged for, either by disapplication from other subjects or outside of the academic curriculum.

Learning Support will be offered as a (no cost) small-group alternative to some language options. This will be by invitation only by Deputy Head (Academic), after recommendation. Further support (1:2:1 or small group) will be available and charged for, either at times when disappplied from other subjects or outside of the academic curriculum.

To raise standards by supporting the curriculum through effective use of ICT and to raise ICT standards by delivering learning in context, ICT will no longer be taught as a standalone subject in Years 7 & 8. Instead a programme of delivery through other subject areas will be in place; this will continue a programme which

begins in the Prep School. ICT should be used whenever appropriate in all teaching at Rydal Penrhos. A one-year intensive course in Year 9 will support pupils in being able to demonstrate high standards in ICT with, as a minimum, an industry standard ITQ (Information Technology Qualification).

Games and other activities move from the academic curriculum to the extra-curriculum. These subjects continue to be compulsory and at the heart of the Rydal Penrhos curriculum; the change is mostly for accounting purposes and to bring a greater proportion of staff in to this fold. PE will be retained as a core subject in the academic curriculum for Years 7 & 8 so that important skills and knowledge can be developed. Thereafter PE will be delivered through other Games and extra-curricular activities. PE will continue to be offered as an academic subject at both GCSE and A-level.

The Timetable

There are up to thirty two lessons available in the five day teaching week, with each lesson lasting for 40 minutes.

	Lessons per week		
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English	4	4	4
Mathematics	4	4	4
Science	4	6	6*
Religious Studies	2	2	2
French	2	2	4
German	~	2	
Geography	2	2	2
History	2	2	2
Art	2	1**	1**
Design & Technology (DT)	2	1**	1**
Music	1	****	****
Drama	1**	1**	1**
Home Economics	1**	1**	1**
PSHE	1	1	1
Information and Communications Technology (ICT)	~	~	1
Learning Support (LS)	2***	4***	4***
English as a Foreign Language (EFL)	2***	4***	4***
Physical Education (PE)	2	1	~
	30	30	30

* taught by specialist teachers of Physics, Chemistry, and Biology.

** taught as a double period for half of the year

*** after recommendation as an alternative to other foreign languages

**** Music is offered in Years 8 and 9 as part of the extra-curricular enrichment programme

HOW AND WHEN CHOICES ARE MADE

Beyond recommendations based on need (EFL or LS), there are no decisions required until the end of Year 8, at which time a selection of language (German or French) will be requested.

Looking further ahead, in the Spring Term of Year 9, the GCSE Options Presentation precedes a Parents' Evening (Tuesday 22 February, 4.30pm, for 2011). The presentation identifies the process of decision making together with an overview of the considerations that may be borne in mind.