

GENERAL INFORMATION

KS3 CURRICULUM

At Millais School pupils learn through the taught curriculum (formal) and the informal curriculum through a wide range of extra-curricular activities, tutor time and themed assemblies. There is a strong emphasis on social, moral and spiritual development in all areas of school life.

Informal Curriculum

Pupils learn about citizenship through participation in school and external clubs or organisations - for example, school councils, Outset work, Duke of Edinburgh Award and Young Enterprise. Participation in such groups helps students learn about key skills and also provides opportunities to use entrepreneurial skills; to develop, make and evaluate products or services and to identify opportunities to be active citizens.

Formal Curriculum

At Millais the formal curriculum operates over a two week timetable of 30 lessons (of 50 minutes) in each week. The 60 lessons over each fortnight are distributed as follows:

Subject	Number of lessons per fortnight		
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English	7	7	7
Maths	7	7	7
Science	8	8	8
French	4	5	5
Second Foreign Language	4	5	5
Design and Technology	4	4	4
History	4	3	4
Geography	4	3	4
Religious Education	2	2	2
Art	2	2	2
Drama	2	2	2
Music	2	2	2
Physical Education	4	4	4
Personal Development	4	4	-
Information Technology	2	2	2
Personal Social Health & Citizenship Education (PSHCE)	-	-	2
Total	60	60	60

In Year 7, most subjects are taught in mixed ability tutor groups. However, Maths, Science and English usually set early on in Year 7. Design Technology groups are smaller than tutor groups for safety reasons.

The pupils' moral and spiritual development takes place both through the formal lessons of the curriculum, in the playground, during assemblies and tutor time.

Homework

Homework is a vital part of learning and takes place in a variety of forms. Traditional written homework, a research project, use of the Internet, a specific design and make task are all examples of types of homework.

At Millais, homework is set according to a homework timetable. All pupils are given an Extended Learning Record (ELR) at the start of the school year in which homework tasks are recorded. Parents are asked to help their daughters by checking the Record regularly and signing it. Parents are also encouraged to write any comments in the ELR as a form of communication to the teachers at school.

Frequency and length of homework

In Years 7 & 8 two homework subjects are set on most weekday nights, however, there may be three subjects on some nights. Some work is also set at the weekends. Homework is set at 30 minutes per subject and modern languages homeworks are 20 minutes three times per fortnight. In Year 9, homework is set at 45 minutes per subject and modern languages homeworks are 25 minutes three times per fortnight (each language studied).

Creating an environment for homework

Parents are asked to encourage their daughters to adopt good homework habits early on. Research has shown that attention to the following points can help pupils maximise their academic potential.

- Pupils should be encouraged to start their homework within 45 minutes of arriving home from school. It is much harder to get down to it after a prolonged break and leisure activities can be built in after all homework is complete.
- Pupils should break up their homework and not try to do it all at once. Research shows that working for longer than an hour at a time is rarely effective.
- Pupils need a quiet place where they can study and a desk or table at which to work.
- Homework done in front of the television is rarely successful!
- Some pupils find working to music is beneficial. However, loud music is not often a good idea!
- Some pupils have a tendency to spend hours on homework and become distressed over it. Staff will always be reasonable with a pupil who has done her best. It is better that she stops and explains to the teacher the next day that she has had difficulties with the task. It would be useful if a parent could sign the work explaining the correct length of time has been spent on it.
- Homework tasks should never take much longer than the stated time allocation
- Parents can help their daughters by ensuring that they don't allow homework tasks to accumulate as this may result in an overload of subjects on one particular night. Generally, homework is best done on the night it is set.

Assessments, exams and reports

We report to parents termly on the progress of their daughter. Parents are informed of their child's Personal Commitment to Learning (PCTL) in a report which shows both the progress made towards predicted levels, how committed the pupil is to their own learning and how they approach their studies. During the year, each pupil will receive a full report which comments on her progress in more detail. All reports show how a pupil can make improvements to their performance.

The progress of all pupils in Key Stage 3 is checked continuously through key assessment tasks in every subject. In Years 7 & 9 there are annual examinations in certain subjects but not all.

There are two parents' evenings for Year 7 pupils during the year. The first, held early in the autumn term, is an informal meeting where parents are able to meet some of the staff who teach the pupils, then a more formal consultation evening where parents have the opportunity to discuss pupil progress with individual teachers. There is one parents' evening for Year 8 pupils in the spring term.

Parents receive information about the levels achieved in all subjects at the end of Year 9.

There is an Options Afternoon for Year 9 pupils early in the spring term followed by a consultation evening, also in the spring term.

For further information about Key Stage 3 go to Curriculum Area links.