

Thomas Deacon Academy



Year 8 Mini Options

Dear Student,

You are just over halfway through Year 8, and it is time for you to start thinking about the subjects you would like to study next year. We believe that you are old enough to make smart, sensible decisions about the courses you would like to follow. The choices you make will enable you to focus on those subjects that you enjoy the most.

Use this booklet, talk to teachers and older students to find out the information you need in order to make the right choice for you.

Dear Parent/Carer,

In this booklet you will find out more about the Year 9 curriculum and the choices that your son or daughter will be making this term.

We are asking all Year 8 students to select their options ready for Year 9. This is **not** their GCSE choices but an initial opportunity to practice making good choices and develop important decision-making skills.

Please support your son or daughter by discussing these options over the next few days and help them to be ready to make the right choice. Should you have any questions please email: options@tda.education.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Treverton

Assistant Principal

The Year 9 Curriculum from September 2025

In Year 9, students follow the curriculum as set out below:

Subject	Hours per fortnight
English (Lit. and Lang.)	8
Maths	8
Science	6
Geography	3
History	4
Language (Spanish or French)	4
IT	2

Subject	Hours per fortnight
Option 1	3
Option 2	3
Core PE	3
RE	4
Food technology	1
PD	1
TOTAL	50

Year 8 students need to choose from:

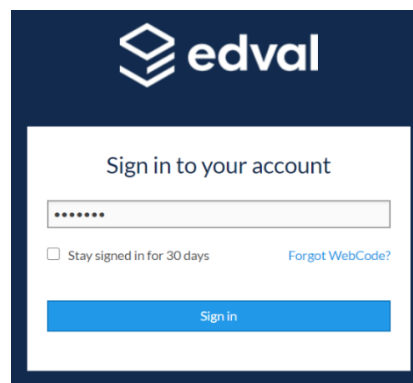
Block 1: Drama Design Technology

Block 2: Art and Textiles Dance Music Photography

How to complete the Mini-Options process

You will need to use an on-line platform called Edval to select your Options. Below are the steps you need to follow:

1. You will receive an email (to your school email account) this will contain:
 - a. A link to the Edval Education website
 - b. A unique web code
2. Click on the link
3. Copy and paste the unique web code (from the email) into the entry box on the Edval landing page.
4. Click on "Sign-in"
5. Click on Year 8 Mini-Options – this will take you to a blank Options Form.
6. Here you will find "Block 1" and "Block 2".



7. For ***each*** block you need to use the drop-down menus to enter your preferences, i.e., the subject you most want to study needs to be entered as your ***FIRST*** choice.
 - a. First
 - b. Second
 - c. Third
 - d. Fourth
8. Make sure you talk to your parents about your options.
9. When you have completed the form, you will have the opportunity to email your choices to yourself.

To watch a video which takes you through this process, please click here. <https://youtu.be/wPfggQFSXe4>

Closing date for Year 8 Mini-Options choices is **Friday 4th April.**

If you have any questions, please contact: options@tda.education

Year 9 Art and Textiles



Who is this course aimed at?

In Art and Textiles, you will get the chance to express yourself creatively and imaginatively. Enjoying expressing your ideas in a variety of methods and using different materials will be key to your success. You will get to explore different cultures, history and a wide range of contemporary artists as well as observing and recording through drawing, painting, and printmaking.

You should enjoy experimenting with ideas and exploring materials. You will require good organisational and analysis skills. There is some written work required in order to show your analysis and research, however support is always given. Therefore, if you are a practical minded student this is an excellent choice for you.

Course Outline

Art and Textiles: The course will focus on the key points listed below. You will also have a choice of some artists and materials allowing you to experience and refine working independently.

During Year 9 you will build on skills from Years 7 & 8. You will be introduced to skills that will provide you with a foundation should you go on to study Art, Photography or Textiles at GCSE.

Equally the skills you learn can cross over to support your learning in other curriculum areas, such as analytical and research skills and developing and managing a project.

- **Confectionary** – practise observational skills using a range of materials; pencil, crayon, oil pastel, photography, collage, watercolour.
- **Architecture** – drawing with 1 and 2 perspective, exploring a range of artists and techniques, working 2D and 3D.
- **Recycling project** – exploring the current issues we face as a society and using recycled objects and materials to create 2D and 3D artwork. Looking at creating fashion and wearable items.

How much home learning can I expect?

You will be expected to complete homework in line with the whole school policy which is at least one piece of homework a fortnight. Homework is part of the course requirements, and you are expected to complete these tasks in order to fulfil the course.

Students will be provided with the appropriate paper and folder for this course, however they will benefit from having access to Art equipment at home. Homework tasks will vary and could focus on research, media skills, written analysis, observational work and presentation of coursework.



Year 9 Dance



Who is this course aimed at?

This course is aimed at students who are hardworking, committed, and willing to work over and above. To be successful in Dance during Year 9 you need to have fully engaged in developing your performance and choreographic skills and enjoyed participating in this subject during KS3.

You need to have a keen interest in exploring the key skills of choreography and performance. You should be able to work both independently and alongside others to support solo and group work. If you enjoy being creative on a practical level, then this is a perfect choice for you.

Course Outline

Throughout Year 9 students access a variety of key performance and choreographic skills that increase their knowledge and understanding of Dance alongside their practical ability. Students will participate in a range of activities that will enhance these skills and encourage them to explore and select creative movement ideas when choreographing movement.

- **Street Dance:** Students are taught a set sequence and then explore various compositional devices to develop the original movement material as well as mastering the given content. Professional works are also referenced to aid learning.
- **Swan Song:** Students use the professional dance work 'Swan Song', choreographed by Christopher Bruce, as a stimulus to create their own movement material based on the theme of 'interrogation'.
- **Motif Development:** Students will be introduced to Motif, Variation and Development as part of the choreographic process. They will explore how different stimuli can be used as a starting point when creating a vision for a piece of choreography.
- **Practitioner study:** Students will study the work of Sadek Waff whose choreography is inspired by Street dance in particular tutting and Toyman.

- Waff founded the dance troupe 'Geometrie Variable' and calls his unique movement style 'Murmurations'.
- **Independent choreographic project Assessment:** Students create their own dance piece, using a stimulus, style, and music of their choice. This happens over two terms to allow the students to also study the design elements of a performance.

What do I need to wear?

Clothing: TDA PE uniform

Footwear: Socks or Ballet shoes.

*"Dancing with your feet is one thing,
but dancing with the heart is
another."*

Year 9 Drama



Who is this course aimed at?

This course is aimed at students who have a keen interest in developing their Drama skills specifically in relation to performance and devising works.

Drama encourages all students to explore and develop their devising and performance skills in depth. It encourages them to be analytical of their work and that of others to show their understanding of the creative process when devising, reading texts, or performing.

Students need to be enthusiastic and have a real passion for performing and creating work both independently and as part of a group.

Course Outline

- **Devising:** Students are given stimulus John Dillinger and then they create a short performance, showing knowledge and understanding of rehearsal techniques, performance and devising skills.
- **Devising developed:** Students are given the stimulus Titanic, and they create a short performance depicting the events in the story.
- **Radio Drama:** Students create a radio drama using a chosen genre as a starting point. They develop their skills in storytelling, vocal delivery and creating sound effects.
- **Curious incident of the dog in the night-time:** Students study the play; performing several scenes using a variety of dramatic skills, including narration, physical theatre, and multi-rolling.
- **Devising from a stimulus:** Students will create a performance based on a given starting point. They will work in groups; developing skills in characterisation, scene structure and performance skills.
- **Devising Assessment:** Students will complete an end of year assessment by creating a performance based on a given starting point. They will be expected to combine all of the performance skills into the performance that they have learnt over the year.



*We are such
stuff as
dreams are
made on...*

The Tempest

Year 9 DT

(Design Technology)



Who is this course aimed at?

Creative students who have an interest in developing skills across Design & Technology.

Students will undertake at least 4 different projects with a focus on problem solving and designing within a theme. Subject areas will support your learning in STEAM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths), through cross-curricular activities.

This programme of study will provide students with opportunities to develop their creativity and practical skills, problem solving and life skills.

Students will need to be a hard-working individual who can listen to and act upon instructions and not be afraid to try new skills and techniques.

Course Outline

Students will carry out projects across the DT curriculum;

Project outlines include:

Students will undertake tasks to show their problem solving where they will research, design, make and evaluate, repeat.

Workshop skills will be developed and students will be expected to complete high quality making tasks.

- **Clock** – within a design movement theme, design and make a 3D clock.
- **Architecture** – following the style of an existing architect, design and make a model of a new cafe.
- **Lamp** – thinking about being sustainable and using an organic design – make a working lamp.
- **Buggy** – working as teams to make and race a mini buggy.

It may be possible to progress on to GCSE Product Design or Graphics, and then A Level Product Design or A Level Graphics.

How much home learning can I expect?

You will be expected to complete homework in line with the whole school policy which is one piece a fortnight.

All homework set is designed to complement the program of study and embed learning.

Specialist resources will be provided for the students.



Year 9 Music



Who is this course aimed at?

This course is ideal for students who have a real passion and keen interest in the theoretical and practical elements of Music.

Music encourages all students to explore and develop composing and performance skills in depth. You spend lots of time working in ensembles creating performance pieces, showing your skills in different genres.

If you are currently learning to play an instrument, then this would be a perfect choice for you, but this is not essential.

Course Outline

Music consists of three elements: Performance, Composition and Listening.

It is essential to be able to access all of these in Year 9 in order to develop good knowledge and understanding both practically and theoretically.

Performance

Students will perform short pieces for a range of instruments across a range of topics.

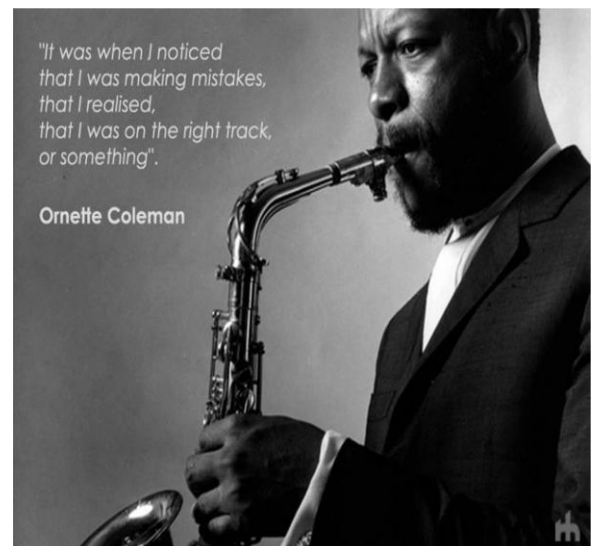
Composition and Listening

All students taking music will have the opportunity to explore a variety of genres, listening techniques, composing techniques and performance technique.

Students will be introduced to these genres through listening exercises, focusing on instruments, the elements of music (pitch, dynamics, tempo etc) and will use these influences to compose/create their own pieces of music.

How much home learning can I expect?

There is an expectation that students will regularly rehearse their chosen instrument in order to enhance their practical skills. Listening to different genres of music will be part of music home learning.



Year 9 Photography



Who is this course aimed at?

If you are interested in learning how to take great photographs, and digitally edit your images, then Photography would be an excellent choice for you. Photography will allow you to expand your abilities in understanding, composing, and creating fantastic digital images.

This course provides an opportunity for you to develop skills and will also provide you with a good foundation should you go on to choose Photography at GCSE.

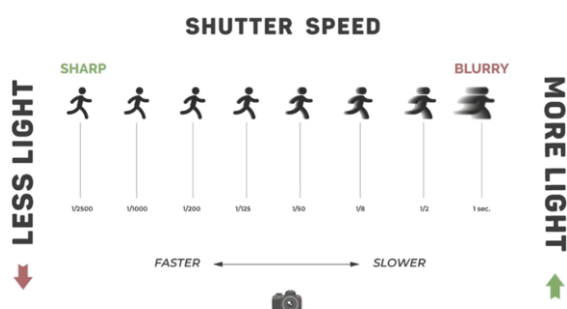
There is some written work required in order to show your analysis and research; however support is always given. Therefore, if you are a practical minded student this is an excellent choice for you.

Course Outline

Photography: You will explore different themes in the course.

You will get to:

- Investigate the history of photography and study the evolution of the camera.
- Explore composition, still life, colour and movement in photography.
- Explore technical settings on the camera such as shutter speed and aperture.
- Investigate and analyse a range of contemporary and historical photographers/artists.
- Learn how to edit on software such as Adobe Photoshop.
- Develop a range of presentation techniques.
- Explore physically manipulating photographs through cutting, sewing, painting, folding and even working 3D.
- Manage and develop projects to a final piece.



How much home learning can I expect?

You will be expected to complete homework in line with the whole school policy which is at least one piece of homework a fortnight. Home learning is part of the course requirements, and you are expected to complete these tasks in order to fulfil the course.

Students will be provided with the appropriate paper and folder for this course, however they will benefit from having access to Art equipment at home.

Home learning tasks will vary and could focus on research, media skills, written analysis, observational work and presentation of coursework.

You are not required to buy a camera for this course as you will be using the school's cameras, but it may be useful for you to have your own SD Card.