



Key Stage 3 Curriculum Overview (Years 7–9)

This document outlines the Key Stage 3 curriculum at Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre. It explains what students learn from Years 7 to 9, how learning is structured and how KS3 prepares students for success at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5.

The curriculum is underpinned by Newent's Teaching and Learning principles. Lessons are designed with clarity and consistency, using explicit instruction, modelling and guided practice. Knowledge is carefully sequenced so that learning builds cumulatively over time and is secured through regular retrieval practice. High-quality feedback supports improvement, while adaptive teaching ensures all students can access ambitious subject content.

SEND and adaptive Teaching

At Newent, adaptive teaching is central to high-quality classroom practice. Teachers plan lessons that anticipate and respond to a range of needs, ensuring that all students can engage meaningfully with the curriculum. This includes clear explanations, scaffolded tasks, targeted questioning, carefully selected resources and flexible approaches within lessons.

Students with SEND are supported through high-quality teaching informed by pupil profiles, regular assessment and close collaboration with the SEND team. Adjustments are made within lessons rather than through reduced ambition, ensuring all learners are supported to achieve well.

Progression from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5

The KS3 curriculum at Newent is deliberately designed to prepare students for the demands of GCSE and post-16 study. Through structured explanation, modelling and guided practice, students gradually develop independence, resilience and confidence as learners.

Regular retrieval practice ensures that core knowledge is embedded in long-term

memory, enabling students to apply learning confidently in more complex and unfamiliar contexts at KS4. Assessment at KS3 is used purposefully to identify strengths and gaps early, allowing teaching to be adapted so that students are well prepared for subject-specific GCSE requirements.

By the end of Year 9, students understand how to revise effectively, respond to feedback and take responsibility for their own progress. This strong foundation supports successful transition into KS4, KS5 and a wide range of post-16 pathways.

English

English at KS3 develops confident, articulate readers, writers and speakers through a rich, ambitious and carefully sequenced curriculum. In Year 7, students build secure foundations in reading and writing through the study of myths, poetry and fiction, learning how writers shape meaning through language, structure and character. Explicit teaching of vocabulary, sentence construction and paragraphing supports clarity and accuracy in written work.

In Year 8, students deepen analytical and rhetorical skills through the study of longer prose texts, poetry and non-fiction. They explore how writers communicate ideas about power, morality and society, while developing the ability to craft sustained analytical and persuasive responses. Structured discussion and oracy activities support confident spoken language.

In Year 9, students engage with increasingly complex texts, including modern fiction, journalism and Shakespeare. They refine evaluative writing, comparison and interpretation, preparing them for the demands of GCSE English. Retrieval, modelling and feedback ensure consistent progress and independence.

Mathematics

Mathematics at KS3 builds fluency, reasoning and problem-solving through a coherent and cumulative curriculum. In Year 7, students secure number sense, place value, fractions, decimals, introductory algebra and geometry, supported by clear modelling and guided practice.

In Year 8, learning extends to proportional reasoning, graphs, probability and algebraic manipulation. Students apply mathematical thinking to real-life contexts such as data handling, finance and scale, strengthening conceptual understanding and confidence.

In Year 9, students consolidate and extend learning through algebra, geometry, graphs and mathematical reasoning. Emphasis is placed on explanation, accuracy and problem-solving, ensuring strong preparation for GCSE mathematics and post-16 study.

Science

Science at KS3 provides a strong foundation across biology, chemistry and physics while developing scientific enquiry skills. In Year 7, students learn laboratory safety, scientific equipment and foundational concepts such as cells, forces and particles.

In Year 8, students develop understanding of body systems, energy, plants, microbes and chemical reactions. Practical investigations are used purposefully to reinforce scientific concepts and build accuracy in data collection and analysis.

In Year 9, the curriculum transitions towards GCSE-style thinking, including genetics, electricity and forces. Students develop confidence in using scientific language, evaluating evidence and applying knowledge, preparing them for further scientific study.

History

History at KS3 develops chronological understanding, critical thinking and historical literacy. In Year 7, students explore prehistory and early civilisations, learning how societies form, develop and change over time.

Year 8 examines themes such as empire, slavery, power and revolution. Students analyse cause, consequence and significance, evaluate sources and construct increasingly sophisticated written arguments.

In Year 9, students study twentieth-century history, including the World Wars and the rise of authoritarian regimes. They engage with historical interpretations and debate, preparing them for the analytical demands of GCSE history.

Geography

Geography at KS3 develops understanding of physical and human processes and how they interact. In Year 7, students build place knowledge, map skills and geographical enquiry, learning to describe and explain patterns and processes.

Year 8 focuses on population, coasts and the use of geographical data, including GIS. Students develop skills in data interpretation and spatial thinking.

In Year 9, students explore global challenges such as development, hazards and climate change, applying knowledge to real-world issues and preparing for GCSE geography.

Modern Foreign Languages

Modern Foreign Languages at KS3 aim to develop confident communicators with an understanding of other cultures. In Year 7, students acquire core vocabulary and grammar to describe themselves, school and everyday life accurately.

Year 8 broadens language use through expressing opinions, discussing media and using a wider range of tenses. Grammar is revisited and extended to support accuracy and fluency.

In Year 9, students communicate more complex ideas about society, work and relationships, preparing them for the linguistic demands of GCSE and A-level study.

Religious Education

Religious Education at KS3 supports students in understanding beliefs, values and ethical questions in a diverse society. In Year 7, students explore core religious concepts and beliefs about God.

Year 8 focuses on Islam and religion in modern Britain, developing understanding of lived religion, identity and community.

In Year 9, students examine moral and philosophical questions, engaging with ethical dilemmas and contrasting viewpoints. RE promotes respectful dialogue, reflection and critical thinking.

Design & Technology

Design and Technology at KS3 develops creativity, technical competence and problem-solving skills. Students work with resistant materials, textiles, food and electronics, learning how products are designed, made and evaluated.

Health and safety, iterative design and evaluation are embedded throughout KS3, alongside consideration of sustainability and real-world application.

The curriculum prepares students for GCSE Design and Technology and vocational pathways.

Art

Art at KS3 encourages creativity, observation and personal expression. In Year 7, students learn the formal elements of art and develop core drawing and recording skills.

Year 8 explores colour, movement and artistic styles, building understanding of artists and contexts.

In Year 9, students focus on the human form and expressive responses, developing independence and confidence in preparation for GCSE art.

Music

Music at KS3 develops performance, composition and listening skills across a wide range of musical styles. Students learn how musical elements are used to create meaning and effect.

Keyboard skills, ensemble performance and composition are embedded throughout KS3, with increasing technical and musical challenge.

By Year 9, students are well prepared for the musical knowledge, discipline and creativity required at GCSE and A-level.

Drama

Drama at KS3 builds confidence, collaboration and communication skills. In Year 7, students develop core performance techniques and group work skills.

Year 8 introduces scripted and genre-based work, including classical and contemporary styles, strengthening interpretative skills.

In Year 9, students engage in GCSE-style scripted and devised performance, developing evaluation, reflection and independence.

Physical Education

Physical Education at KS3 promotes physical competence, teamwork and leadership. Students experience a broad and balanced programme including games, fitness and individual activities.

Assessment focuses on skill development, tactical understanding and personal qualities such as resilience and leadership.

The curriculum supports lifelong physical activity and prepares students for GCSE PE and sports pathways.

Computing

Computing at KS3 develops digital literacy, computational thinking and creativity. Students learn about networks, programming, data handling and digital design.

Online safety, digital citizenship and responsible use of technology are explicitly taught.

The curriculum prepares students for GCSE Computer Science and a digital future.

PSHE and Citizenship

PSHE and Citizenship at KS3 support personal development, wellbeing and active citizenship. Students learn about relationships, mental health, online safety, finance, careers and British values.

Discussion, reflection and real-world scenarios develop decision-making, resilience and respect for others.

The curriculum prepares students to be informed, responsible and active members of society.