Founded 1922

HERSCHEL
GIRLS SCHOOL

~ GRADE 8 ~

GETC CURRICULUM 2026

Transforming teaching and learning
for the future

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Learning to make a difference

MESSAGE FROM MS K EAST

Our grade 8 and 9's have been partaking in a curriculum program which has involved a great deal of transformation of the learning landscape and has been most successful for the past 6 years. We have recently undergone a reflection and evaluation process so that we can ensure that the curriculum we are designing for the Grade 8 and 9 pupils sets them up for success in the FET (Gr 10 – 12) and for the future world.

Learning areas have been grouped into Learning Communities. This allows cohesion for subjects – ensuring all courses are contributing meaningfully to the development of the core principles. These core principles allow for successful conceptual transfer between subjects. The grouping breaks down silos for - real life learning does not happen in this way and inter-disciplinary courses, which are so valuable, can align more effectively to the group outcomes.

There are a range of courses – optional and compulsory which either follow a year or semester program. In some learning areas there are a range of courses which allow the pupils some choice leading to autonomy and independence. The Grade 8 and 9 courses are designed to be interesting and meaningful and offer the pupils exposure to opportunities where they can make contributions to their communities.

'Students demonstrate interdisciplinary understanding when they bring together concepts, methods, or forms of communication from two or more disciplines or established areas of expertise so that they can explain a phenomenon, solve a problem, create a product, or raise a new question in ways that would have been unlikely through a single discipline.' (IB MYP Curriculum Program)

This program allows our grade 8 and 9 pupils to engage in active learning which still continues to focus on acquisition of knowledge, but also on important 21st century skills and the development of attitudes and values which supplement the learning of content. As a result, competency is then shown by demonstrating a mastery of these skills.

The World Economic Forum has outlined essential characteristics that will define high-quality learning in the future. These skills include global citizenship, an awareness of the wider world and sustainability, innovation and creativity, problem-solving and analytical thinking, technology (data science and programming), interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence, empathy, collaboration and social awareness.

Saadia Zahidi, Managing Director of the World Economic Forum said in an interview in 2023 ‘that it's also become very important to have leadership skills and to have social influence, and the ability to work with other people. The traits that make us human, make us able to relate with each other and to get innovative, creative things done in the workplace’. This was further emphasised in the Harvard Business review article by Stephen Kosslyn – author of building the intentional university. ‘These are the skills that give humans the edge over robots’.

A powerful shift is required from static knowledge to lifelong learning, from routine tasks to creative and analytical thinking and from individual achievement to collaboration and emotional intelligence. We want to design curriculum that places emphasis on valuing agency, self awareness and purposeful learning; so that we can develop a problem solver, a systems thinker and a compassionate teammate, who is an adaptable curious humane being. (*Kiran Bir Sethi- Founder of The Riverside School)*

The future of work looks grim for many people. A recent study from Forrester estimated that 10% of U.S. jobs would be automated this year, and another from McKinsey estimates that close to half of all U.S. jobs may be automated in the next decade. Succeeding in the digital world requires us to understand how technology will impact our world but we will also need to cultivate critical soft skills too so we can do the things machines can’t.

Our ability to manage and utilize emotion and to take into account the effects of context are key ingredients of critical thinking, creative problem solving, effective communication, adaptive learning, and good judgment. It has proven very difficult to program machines to emulate such human knowledge and skills, and it is not clear when (or whether) efforts to do so will ever bear fruit.

New careers. New challenges. New technologies. So how do we prepare them? We don’t just teach what to know. We teach them how to bridge what they know to what they’ve never seen before. That bridge is called conceptual transfer.It’s how students learn to use prior knowledge in original ways, connect ideas across disciplines and adapt to complexity with confidence. In an era of constant change, this is the skill that matters most. The goal is lasting understanding that can move, stretch, and evolve. (Julie Stern)

Our objective is to develop a kind, respectful, confident/brave, and well-balanced pupils who are able:

- To critically and creatively engage constructively in the world/different environments in an empathetic, responsible, anti-fragile and curious manner;
- To be adaptive, agile and open minded;
- To direct their own learning;
- To work collaboratively; and
- To be a life-long learner

in order to be the best version of themselves and to make an impact, not for personal gain but for the greatest good for the greatest number.

We believe our Grade 8 and 9 curriculum gives us the opportunity to teach all of these skills which are so critical for our pupils to meet the demands of the ever-changing world and a world that is post-pandemic.

We want to create curriculum that will set our pupils apart?

Adaptability – Learn, unlearn, relearn
Systems Thinking – Understand complex connections
Empathy & Ethics – Make wise, human-centered decisions
Creativity – Solve new problems in new ways
Collaboration – Work across disciplines and cultures
Curiosity - asking why?

The Grade 8 and 9 pupils have responded positively to this system. Educators and pupils enjoy teaching smaller classes, the autonomy of choice of learning topics and the experimentation with new, relevant and inspiring learning materials. Our teachers have also thought carefully about how assessment needs to change in order to support this new focus.

What will the GETC Phase look like in 2026?

The Grade 8 curriculum is divided into learning communities. Grade 8's will select from a list of compulsory and optional courses, some which will span a full year and others which will be semester courses.

Languages and Literature	English HL	Compulsory	Year course
	FAL: Afrikaans	Compulsory: select one	Year course
	FAL: isiXhosa		
	8SAL1 French Beginners	Optional	Semester course
	8SAL 2 Conversational IsiXhosa	Optional	Semester course
Mathematics		Compulsory	Year course
The Arts	Dramatic Arts 801	Compulsory: select one	Year course
	Visual Arts 801		
	Music 801		
	8CAE7 Music in Motion 802	Optional	Semester course
	8CAE6: LENS & LIGHT: Photography in Art		
	8CAE9 Smart Film making (Tech)		
	8CAE8 From the page to the stage (Tech)		
	8CAE15 Behind the Curtain (TECH)		
Sciences	**Physical Science**	Compulsory	Year course
	Life Science/Biology	Compulsory	Year course
	8HSSG Geography/Earth Science:	Compulsory: select atleast 1	Semester course
	8HSSG3: Sunshine and Snow … be the first to know…		
	8HSSG9 Close the gaps with Maps		
	8HSSG6 A journey through time to the Anthropocene		
Individuals and Societies	**8HSSH History:**	Compulsory: select atleast 1	Semester course
	8HSSH9 Makings of the Modern World		
	8HSSH4 'Woman Rise!'		

	8HSSH6: *W*athint'imbokodo: you strike a woman – you strike a rock'		
	8HSSH5 Travelling in Africa: From Ancient Empires to Modern Times		
	8HSSH7 Echoes of Cape Town: A Journey through Time		
	8EMS Commerce	Compulsory: select atleast 1	Semester course
	8EMS1 Transactions in Action (pre-requisite for Gr 9 IOU and Gr 10 Acc.		
	8EMS2 Econo-Biz		
	Consumer Studies		Included in the IFD programm
	Life Orientation	Compulsory	Year course
	Research Skills	Compulsory	Semester course
Design and Technology	8TECH6 Toy-Tronics (CAE)	Compulsory: Select 1	Semester course
	8TECH2 Tech-in-Motion		
	8CAE9 Smart Film making (CAE)		
	8CAE8 From the page to the stage (CAE)		
	8CAE15 Behind the Curtain (CAE)		
	Digital Literacy	Compulsory	Semester course

Which skills will be emphasised?

Me and Myself
Focus: Personal development, self-regulation, and internal growth

1. **Self-Management & Independent Learning**
Sets goals, manages time, and meets deadlines.
Reflects on feedback and adjusts strategies.
Demonstrates initiative and accountability.

2**. Metacognition**
Reflects on thinking and learning processes.
Identifies strengths and areas for growth.
Adapts strategies based on self-awareness.

3. **Critical Thinking**
Evaluates information for reliability and bias.
Differentiates between fact, opinion, and interpretation.
Uses logic and evidence to support conclusions.

4. Digital Fluency
Uses digital tools confidently and ethically.
Manages digital presence and practices responsible online behavior.
Applies computational thinking in problem-solving.

5. Ethical Awareness
Considers ethical implications of actions and decisions.
Demonstrates empathy and responsibility.
Reflects on values and their impact on others.

6**. Creativity & Curiosity**
Generates original ideas and explores new possibilities.
Takes risks and learns from mistakes.
Finds joy in experimentation and sharing creative work.

Me and Others (and School)

Focus: Social interaction, collaboration, and community engagement

1. **Collaboration**
Works effectively in groups.
Respects diverse perspectives.
Shares responsibility and contributes meaningfully.

2. **Communication**
Expresses ideas clearly in various formats.
Listens actively and responds thoughtfully.
Adapts communication to audience and context.

3**. Leadership**
Takes initiative and supports peers.
Demonstrates responsibility in group settings.
Encourages participation and open-mindedness.

4. **Social Awareness**
Demonstrates empathy and kindness.
Understands and respects different perspectives.
Engages constructively in group and school communities.

Me and the World

Focus: Global understanding, real-world application, and inquiry

1**. Global Awareness**
Shows curiosity about global issues.
Understands interconnectedness of local and global contexts.
Acts with empathy and responsibility toward global communities.

2. **Inquiry and Research**
Asks meaningful questions and investigates independently.
Evaluates sources for credibility and bias.
Synthesizes information to support conclusions or creative work.

3. **Practical Application & Applied Knowledge**
Applies knowledge in real-world or cross-disciplinary contexts.
Demonstrates craftsmanship and digital fluency.
Works with care, accuracy, and attention to detail.

LEARNING COMMUNITIES

LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

MANIFESTO

At Herschel, language is more than a subject: it is a lens through which the world is understood, challenged, and re-imagined. In South Africa, multilingualism is a necessity, a bridge across cultures and identities. The ability to think and communicate in more than one language equips our students to be empathetic citizens, creative problem-solvers, and articulate leaders in an interconnected world.

In the 21st century, language competence cannot be measured only by grammar drills or essays written in isolation. While technical mastery remains important, it is embedded within broader practices of communication, creativity, and analysis. Our curriculum treats language and literature as a woven fabric of meaning. Texts across genres and languages, from Shakespeare to Fanie Viljoen, from isiXhosa oral poetry to modern satire, are read in dialogue with one another. A meme in French or Afrikaans can be analysed alongside a novel extract in English or isiXhosa. This inter-textual, multilingual approach sharpens critical thinking and cultural literacy.

We reject rote learning and embrace Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL). Our classrooms are dialogic spaces where students co-construct meaning, ask questions, and develop original insights. Lessons engage intellect, creativity, voice, and agency, sparking curiosity, demanding rigour, fostering joy. Our lessons aim to contribute to interdisciplinary projects and integrated focus days, and support the development of the Grade 9 Exit Profile by intentional teaching of transferable skills.

Language competence is not measured by isolated drills but through broader practices of communication, creativity, and analysis. In line with Herschel's vision, we cultivate:

- **Multilingual Fluency**: honouring South Africa's linguistic diversity.
- **Global Citizenship**: preparing students to engage international discourses.
- **Lifelong Learning**: nurturing skills of analysis, expression, and reflection.

We commit to innovative teaching that models agility, curiosity, and creativity. Our classrooms will be alive with dialogue, collaboration, and critical engagement. We

challenge our students to inhabit multiple languages, traverse multiple texts, and use their voices powerfully in a complex world.

Language is freedom. Language is connection. Language is power.

LEARNING THREADS:

1.Communication and Expression

- Equip students to speak, write, and present with confidence across contexts and audiences.
- Foster expression as a form of personal agency, ethical persuasion, and leadership

2. Critical Literacy, Connections, Analysis and Interpretation -English & Afrikaans only

- Teach students to question texts, recognising bias, subtext, and ideology.
- Develop higher-order thinking through inter-textual connections across genres, modes, and languages.

3. Identity, Diversity and Cultural Awareness / Perspectives

- Explore how language and literature shape identity, belonging, and representation.
- Cultivate empathy and respect by engaging with diverse voices, both local and global.

4. Creativity

- Encourage imaginative play with form, voice, and genre in both writing and performance.
- Use creative practice to develop originality, problem-solving, and joy in language learning.

5. Multimodality

- Analyse and produce meaning across multiple platforms: text, image, sound, media, and performance.
- Equip students with visual and digital literacy for a complex, media-rich world.

6. Language / Grammar Competency

- Build strong foundations in grammar, syntax, editing, and stylistic precision.
- Empower students to manipulate language creatively and purposefully once technical skills are mastered.

SUBJECTS:
English Home Language – Compulsory Year Course

"The English language is nobody's special property. It is the property of the imagination: it is the property of the language itself." - Derek Walcott.

In the spirit of the above quotation, the English department aims to be as inclusive as possible in its choice of texts and pedagogy so that the English classroom fosters

a distinct sense of belonging and mental agility. The department encourages a student-centred and activity-based approach where students are challenged to think critically, become independent learners, and articulate their views with conviction and respect.

In English Home Language, there are **four focal areas:**

- Listening and Speaking
- Reading and Viewing
- Writing and Presenting
- Language

Language study overlaps all areas of English – for example, an oral presentation will be enhanced if language is used appropriately and if the speaker understands rhetorical devices. These focal areas allow our English classes to explore many aspects of literature, film and language in broad and exciting ways.

Regular reading and writing are strongly recommended to expand students' vocabulary and horizons so that they are able to thrive in most of their subjects at school and beyond.

Skills developed in English:

- the ability to solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking
- the ability to work effectively with others as members of a team
- the ability to collect, organise and critically evaluate information
- the ability to communicate effectively.
- Our language curriculum prepares students for the challenges they will face as South Africans and as members of the global community.

Content covered in English:

The literature study for the GET phase may include novels, dramas, film study and poetry. The students also read home readers which are assessed.

The Grade 12 IEB Senior Certificate requires successful completion of the following units:

School Based Assessment (written) Portfolio	25% of final mark
Oral Portfolio	25 % of final mark
Final two examination papers	50 % of final mark

Paper I includes comprehension, summary, poetry, critical and visual literacy and language.

Paper II includes literary essay writing and transactional writing.

FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE – Compulsory Select ONE

Afrikaans First Additional Language

As one of the most widely spoken languages in South Africa, Afrikaans First Additional Language is an obvious choice in the Western Cape.

Our main aim in this subject is to nurture a love for the language and a respect for all its users. We introduce a wide variety of relevant and challenging topics. Topics are also approached in a way that encourages diversity, inclusivity, and social awareness. In the Afrikaans department we follow a communicative approach to teaching Afrikaans as a Additional Language.

Grade Eight students will be able to:

- Listen carefully and speak confidently to a range of target groups in a variety of contexts.
- Read, view and engage with texts to develop comprehension skills. Students are expected to critically evaluate and respond to a variety of texts.
- Write and present their views, using correct formats and conventions in different contexts.
- Use Language structures and conventions correctly and effectively.

All four skills are assessed using a range of formative and summative assessments.

The linguistic skills and concepts taught in Afrikaans reinforce those taught in English and will therefore be most beneficial. In an effort to consolidate vocabulary used frequently, the curriculum is structured around the following four themes in Grade Eight:

- Hello High School
- Making a Difference
- Food Culture
- My Feelings and I

Our Grade Eight curriculum lays a solid foundation for a successful high school career in Afrikaans.

IsiXhosa First Additional Language

This is a compulsory subject for Grade Twelve if a pupil does not select Afrikaans (FAL). In this subject, students will develop the following IZAKHONO (Skills):

- UKUPHULAPHULA NOKUTHETHA (Listening and Speaking)
- UKUFUNDA NOKUBUKELA (Reading and Viewing)
- UKUBHALA NOKUNIKEZELA (Writing and Presenting)
- IZAKHI NEMIGAQO YOKUSETYENZISWA KOLWIMI (Language structures and conversions)

The following aspects are crucial in this subject: reading to extend vocabulary, formal language structure and an appreciation of literature. Activities will include critical thinking, textual analysis, formulation of an argument, visual literacy and communicative skills. Formal isiXhosa is used as the medium of instruction and presentation in the classroom.

Themes chosen to study are topical and relevant and aim to relate to the interests of students, as well as equip them to participate as responsible citizens in the life of local, national and global communities.

ASSESSMENT:

All four skills are assessed using both formative and summative assessment. The emphasis is on continuous assessment e.g. tasks, assignments, orals and research projects as well as tests throughout the year.

WHO SHOULD CONSIDER TAKING ISIXHOSA FAL?

It is strongly advised that a motivated and diligent mother-tongue pupil should select this subject in Grade Eight and Nine if they wish to continue isiXhosa to Grade Twelve. Pupils who have done isiXhosa First Additional Language or Second additional Language in primary school are also encouraged to take isiXhosa FAL in Grade Eight.

SECOND ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

8SAL1: French for beginners – Optional Semester Course

If you are considering doing French in Grades 10 to 12, then you must select French Beginners in Grade 8 (for one of the semesters) and French Intermediate Semester 1 and Semester 2 in Grade 9.

Immerse yourself in the beauty of the French language, and discover a world of rich culture, and vibrant traditions. In this course, you'll journey through some of the charming regions of France, engaging in fun activities and games that will build your foundation in very basic spoken French.

You'll learn to greet people with confidence, count and tell the time in French, and express your preferences. Plus, you'll get hands-on experience making French pancakes, exploring your likes and dislikes, discussing activities, and asking questions in French.

But this is more than just a language class—it's your gateway to understanding why French is an invaluable skill in today's global job market.
And to top it all off, you'll savour some French cuisine and enjoy some French films.

Join us and let French be your passport to a whole new world!

A Grade 8 textbook will need to be purchased from the French Department for this course.

8SAL2: IsiXhosa – Thetha Nathi – Optional Semester Course

This optional course introduces students to isiXhosa through practical, everyday communication. From greetings and introductions to navigating places and understanding cultural etiquette, students will build confidence in using isiXhosa in real-life situations.

Each month focuses on a key theme such as storytelling, Ubuntu, or daily conversations, supported by songs, proverbs, and interactive activities. Students will practice through role-plays, dialogues, and real-life simulations, preparing them to engage respectfully and meaningfully in any isiXhosa-speaking environments equipped with both the knowledge of the language and the understanding of the culture. By the end of the course, students will be able to hold basic conversations and appreciate the cultural richness of isiXhosa.

MATHEMATICS

MANIFESTO

Empowering learners to think, question, create, and grow

In the Mathematics Department, we believe Mathematics is more than just numbers and getting to the right answer, but rather a way of thinking that empowers learners to question, explore, and make sense of the world. Our classrooms are spaces for critical thinking, metacognition, and inquiry, where students engage in deep reasoning, collaborate meaningfully, and connect mathematical ideas. We value process over memorisation, embrace mistakes as learning opportunities, and foster curiosity, creativity, and independence.

Our Learners Will Leave With:

- A **growth mindset** towards Mathematics
- Confidence in using **reasoning, logic, and creativity** to solve problems
- The ability to **collaborate, communicate**, and **reflect** on their learning
- Fluency with **digital tools** for mathematical exploration and verification
- An appreciation for Mathematics as a **powerful way to understand the world**

We are a department that believes in thinking bravely, learning deeply, and teaching with purpose.

LEARNING THREADS

These threads represent the recurring conceptual and skill-based strands that run through the two-year mathematics programme at Herschel. Each thread develops progressively from Grade 8 to Grade 9, ensuring continuity, increasing complexity, and preparing learners for senior mathematics. The *Thinking Classrooms* approach is embedded throughout, promoting problem-solving, collaboration, and independent thinking.

1. Number Sense, Algebraic Reasoning & Structure
Descriptor: Develops a solid understanding of number systems, algebraic notation, and the manipulation of expressions and equations. Progresses from foundational number properties in Grade 8 to advanced algebraic manipulation and functional thinking in Grade 9.

Order of operations, number properties (HCF, LCM, primes), introduction to algebra, solving basic equations, recognising patterns, multiplying and factorising expressions, simplifying algebraic fractions, rearranging literal equations, exponents and scientific notation, solving linear, quadratic, and exponential equations.

2. Functional Thinking & Pattern Recognition
Descriptor: Transitions learners from working with numeric and algebraic patterns to understanding and representing functional relationships graphically and symbolically.

Identifying, continuing, and describing patterns; connecting sequences to algebraic rules. Linear, quadratic, and exponential functions; inequalities; graphing methods; interpreting gradients, intercepts, and points of intersection.

3. Geometry, Spatial Reasoning & Deductive Proof
Descriptor: Strengthens the ability to visualise, describe, and reason logically about shapes, transformations, and spatial relationships — building precision through formal proof.

Properties of 2D shapes, angle relationships, symmetry, transformations, introduction to 3D shapes and nets. Pythagoras theorem, congruence and similarity, quadrilateral proofs, formal geometric reasoning and terminology.

4. Measurement, Proportion & Scale
Descriptor: Connects abstract mathematics to physical space, real-world problems, and proportional reasoning.

Perimeter, area, volume, unit conversions, distance–speed–time, basic ratios and percentages. Cylinder volume, advanced ratio problems, direct and inverse proportion, proportional graphs, application in finance and data contexts

5. Data Handling, Probability & Statistical Reasoning
Descriptor: Develops the ability to collect, organise, represent, and interpret data, moving from descriptive statistics to probability-based decision-making.

Data types, graphical representations, averages, range, Excel skills through the *Data Project*. Basic to compound probability, tree diagrams, multiplication and addition rules, linking proportional reasoning with statistical thinking.

6. Financial Literacy & Real-World Application
Descriptor:
Equips learners with the skills to apply mathematical concepts to everyday financial decisions.

Prices, discounts, receipts, introductory budgeting. Percentage change, exchange rates, simple and compound interest, timelines, financial modelling.

Grade 8 and 9 Mathematics aims to lay a sound foundation on which to build in the FET phase.We see the first two years of High School Mathematics as a two year curriculum, forming part of a 5 year curriculum, and treat it as a continual development of mathematical skills. Our main focus in the Senior Phase is on basic algebra and geometry. These are the two most important topics to master for success in this subject in Grade 12. In Grade 8, the use of calculators is not allowed until approximately half way through the second term.

We write ± six summative assessment tests per year, and these have the greatest weighting in terms of the final result in this subject. A variety of formative assessment tasks, however, are also used to develop skills and assess progress. An example is diagnostic testing before one of the important summative tests. This allows us to remediate, or extend, within a topic before the pressure of an important test.

In Mathematics we see critical thinking as one of the most important skill sets to teach. We aim to really focus on this through different, and creative, formative tasks. We have always given the students many opportunities to compete in different Mathematics Competitions and Olympiads and will certainly continue to do so. This is one of our most useful tools for teaching Critical Thinking skills.
With our Grade 8's, we aim to run several lessons with a focus on material not covered in the regular CAPS curriculum. These "out of the syllabus" lessons aim to develop an interest in Mathematics outside of the classroom.
Our aim as a department is to continually research new pedagogical thinking in the delivery of lessons, particularly focusing on ideas that indicate greater depth of thinking and understanding in Mathematics.
In the Grade 8 Maths MS Teams group, we offer a wealth of additional resources to support our students. Under the FILES section, Grade 8 students can access a comprehensive collection of past Herschel tests, exams, and worksheets, complete with memos for all topics covered. Additionally, a video directory is available where students can watch our teachers' lessons on every topic. This resource is particularly valuable if a student misses a class or needs extra help understanding a specific concept.

SCIENCES

MANIFESTO

"Exploring, Understanding, Transforming"

We are a community of curious minds united by the desire to understand the natural world — from the smallest particles to the vast landscapes of our planet and beyond. Together, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Geography provide the lenses through which we explore life's patterns, processes, and possibilities. Our purpose is to empower young women with the knowledge, skills, and courage to inquire, to innovate, and to care for the world they will inherit.

We envision a learning community where the sciences are integrated, and every individual develops:

- a curiosity to question and test ideas.
- perspective to see the interdependence of people, places, and environments.
- and to responsibly act with integrity and compassion in a changing world.

We aspire to equip individuals to be critical thinkers, ethical leaders, and active contributors to South Africa and beyond - women who see challenges as opportunities and approach the future with optimism, courage, and evidence-based thinking.

LEARNING THREADS

1. **Systems and Interactions**: How do components of a system interact, and how does change in one part affect the whole?
   In Biology: Ecosystems, organ systems
   In Physics: Forces in motion, circuits
   In Chemistry: Reactions, equilibrium
   In Earth Science: Climate systems, plate tectonics

2. **Evidence and Investigation**: How do we collect, test, and interpret data to build scientific understanding?
   In all subjects: Emphasis on scientific method, experimental design, analysis of real data
   Encourages inclusion of inquiry-based practicals and lab reports

3. **Change and Scale:** How do scientific processes operate across time and scale?
   In Biology: Evolution, growth, population change
   In Physics: Atomic to universal scales, rates of change, Reaction rates, molecular interactions
   In Earth Science: Geological timescales, erosion, - weathering population growth

4. **Ethics and Impact**: How do science and technology affect people and the planet?
   In Environmental Science: Climate change, conservation, migration, human rights, pollution
   In Biology: Bioethics, genetics
   In Chemistry/Physics: Energy use, pollution, sustainability
   Promotes inclusion of case studies and debates

5. **Structure and Function**: How does the structure of a system or material influence what it can do?
   In Biology: Cells, anatomy
   In Physics: Atomic structure, bonding, Engineering principles, materials science
   In Earth Science- climatology - atmosphere

SUBJECTS

Physical Science – Compulsory Year Course

Physical Science is the way for students to gain a greater understanding and appreciation of the world they inhabit. In Grade 8 we encourage students to start asking questions about the world around them and to actively explore their environment. Our aim is to excite and enthuse the students with a sense of awe and wonder about the world and to begin to appreciate the way in which Science will affect the future on a personal, national and global level.

We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our lessons. From whole-class teaching to practical demonstrations and experimentation. Students are able to plan and carry out scientific investigations, using apparatus correctly and safely. We encourage our students to ask, as well as answer, scientific questions and they are exposed to a large number of problem-solving activities. students are exposed to graphs and statistics and will also use ICT in their lessons to enhance the learning experience. We are fortunate to have well-stocked laboratories and a full-time laboratory assistant so students can gain experience in handling laboratory equipment.

The Chemistry content area explored in Grade 8 includes the nature and behaviour of matter, atomic theory, the periodic table, mixtures and compounds. In the Physics section, students are given an introduction into electricity, light and colour.

Students will also be assessed using a number of different assessment tools. From more formal tests to practical work, enquiry-based research activities and presentations. With more contact time we will ensure that we foster and encourage curiosity and enthusiasm about the natural world beyond the limitations of a set syllabus.

Life Science/Biology – Compulsory Year Course

This subject is about a study of what makes up life. It is an analytical scientific subject where the theory is supported by the use of IT in lessons and the subject matter is underpinned and explored in practical lessons. In Grade 8 the students study Histology (the study of cells), Biochemistry (Photosynthesis and Respiration), Physiology (Skin and Temperature regulation), Animal Behaviour (Ecto- and Endotherms) and Ecology (including Symbiosis and Human impact on the Environment).

The specific aims and learning outcomes include completing investigations, analysing problems and using practical processes and skills in evaluating solutions, having a grasp of scientific, technological and environmental knowledge and being able to apply it in new contexts. students should also understand the uses of natural science and indigenous knowledge in society and the environment

We aim to develop comprehension, understanding, analysis and the use of the scientific method. students will be expected to synthesise answers to problems and develop research skills. The skills acquired are assessed in various ways including tests, worksheets, practical observations and project research.

Geography/Earth Science– Compulsory – Select atleast ONE – Semester Course

8HSSG3: SUNSHINE and SNOW … be the first to know…

Master the science of weather! In this course, students will explore the distinction between weather and climate, and delve into the various elements that contribute to weather patterns. You will gain the skills to read synoptic weather maps and understand how weather forecasts are generated. Students will journey through the diverse climatic regions of the world, from the icy

Antarctic to the tropical rainforests near the Equator. The course also involves a critical analysis of human impacts on the environment, by examining environmental injustices. Students will also critically assess human impacts that contribute to climate change and global warming. This course empowers students to become young eco-champions, committed to living sustainably and reducing their carbon footprint through a deeper understanding of atmospheric processes.

8HSSG6: A JOURNEY through the ANTHROPOCENE

The Anthropocene, the most recently named geological age of the earth, has become a well-used term in many fields of study today. It is the only time period in the history of the world that has been mainly shaped by humans. In this elective we will "dig deep" and uncover the journey of the earth, from 4.6 billion years ago to now. Using studies from Geology, Palaeontology, Archaeology, Physical Science, Life Science and Anthropology, to learn about the ever-changing world. We will learn plenty of impressive new vocabulary, and you will stretch your curiosity, observation, thinking and creative skills. You will research, write, design and make a pop-up story book to showcase what you discover in this course.

8HSSG9: CLOSE the GAPS with MAPS

In the age of Google Maps and the like, the human race is losing the ability to navigate ourselves from place to place. In this course, students will learn spatial skills which range from learning to use basic map work implements to using complex Geographic Information Systems. You will become empowered to provide advice to decision-making bodies about important crises which the global community faces daily, like poverty and climate change. Your creativity will be stretched as you learn to produce your own maps after studying the cartography of ancient ones. Together, we will travel to all four corners of the globe via Google Earth and be able to add our well-researched, fact-checked information to a worldwide app which others will find useful. This course encourages you to develop your spatial intelligence, which not only helps with direction and location, but will also give you the ability to recognise and understand the position of objects around you relative to yourself.

(A pupil needs to take atleast 3 HSS (History HSSH and Geography HSSG) courses in their Grade 8 Year.)

THE ARTS

MANIFESTO

At the heart of human expression lies the need to imagine, create, and communicate. The Arts Faculty cultivates this impulse by equipping students with the skills, confidence and vision to shape their own stories while connecting with the voices of others. In our classrooms, students are not passive learners but active creators who bring ideas to life, whether through performance, sound, or image. They are encouraged to take risks, explore new perspectives, and find joy in the process of making.
We believe that Drama, Music and Visual Art are not just subjects but essential ways of knowing and engaging with the world. The arts provide a lens through which students make sense of themselves, their communities, and cultures past and present. They challenge us to see differently, to listen more deeply, and to express with courage. Through the arts, students discover who they are, how they relate to others, and how they might influence the world around them. They learn to create boldly, reflect critically, and collaborate meaningfully, preparing them to thrive in a future that demands innovation, empathy and resilience.

By choosing subjects from this faculty, students will:

- **Explore like artists** – Observe and interpret the world with sensitivity, experiment with techniques and media, and craft artworks that express individual vision while reflecting broader cultural and historical contexts.
- **Create like dramatists** – Develop confidence, creativity and collaborative spirit through devising, acting, staging, and theatre-making, while exploring the social issues and stories that shape their world.
- **Listen like musicians** – Listen deeply, play expressively, and create original works that integrate technology, culture and emotion, discovering how music connects people across time and place.

Through the Arts, our students become imaginative thinkers, courageous performers, and reflective makers — ready to contribute meaningfully to their communities and the wider world.

LEARNING THREADS:

1. Inspired by the World *(outside-in)* Students interpret and respond to external influences, such as history, culture, existing artists or works, genres, or movements to deepen their own understanding.

- **Visual Arts:** Exploring a range of art movements, learn and develop the styles and techniques of influential artists, both historical and contemporary. Creating original work that is informed by this new knowledge.
- **Drama:** Analysing and performing dramatic texts and plays, genres and styles of performance, social issues and adapting and integrating theses into new performances.
- **Music:** Studying musical traditions and genres; exploring the socio-political impact of music. Learning to critically evaluate and analyse composition and performance.

2. Inside-Out The student's original voice and perspective drives the creation of practical work or theoretical thinking and expression. Ideas start from within and are expressed outwardly through the arts.

- **Visual Arts:** Conceptualising and creating artworks that reflect personal identity, emotions, or imagination, showing originality, creativity and deep personal relevance.
- **Drama:** Using observation and self-reflection students write, devise and create original theatre and film pieces, creating stories and developing characters based on personal insight.
- **Music:** Exploring compositional and performance technique, encouraging the development of self-expression and creativity.

3. Connect & Collaboration The Arts exists as a means of connection: Collaborating, developing empathy, sharing ideas, and engaging with others to create meaningful connections and impact.

- **Visual Arts:** Connecting with peers and teachers, exhibitions and group critiques. Allowing and cultivating reflection, problem solving and critical thinking of both their own and their peers' works. Encouraging self-exploration to create connection and meaning with themselves and the viewer/audience.
- **Drama:** Through ensemble work, all creative projects promote collaboration, listening, empathy and understanding through the use of small and large-group projects, where students must learn to navigate inter-personal relationships. These are student-managed with teacher guidance, using sustained process and peer-reflection to guide the development of the work.
- **Music:** Through collaborative projects and ensemble work, pupils develop aural and teamwork skills; focusing on performance etiquette and critically evaluating each other's creative processes.

4. Exploration and realisation Experimentation, analysis, innovation and craft. Breaking down ideas or works, transforming them, and discovering new possibilities. Honing the practical tools, skills and processes needed for students to realise their full creative potential.

- **Visual Arts:** Experimenting with media, distorting reality, revisiting and challenging styles by incorporating new media with traditional techniques. Growing and encouraging a personal voice and original style through experimentation. Culminating in a tangible artwork.
- **Drama:** Students explore and perform in a range of dramatic elements and styles, developing skills and performance techniques through voice, body, imagination, stagecraft and design. The practice of these skills is done through the development of practicals that are refined for a marker or audience.
- **Music:** Learning, understanding and experimenting with the basic Elements of Music throughout different genres and traditions.

These four threads:

1. Capture **original voice through creation** (*Inside-Out*).
2. Incorporate **response to external sources** (*Outside-In / Inspired by the World*).
3. Emphasise **connection and communal engagement** (*Connect & Communicate*).
4. Encourage **experimentation, transformation** and the honing of **craft** (*Explore & Transform*).

SUBJECTS

**Note:*

- *Each Grade 8 pupil needs to choose ONE of the following subjects as the focus of study for the Creative Arts Year course: Drama 801 OR Music 801 OR Visual Arts 801.*
- *Please note that class sizes will be capped.*
- *The choices for 2026 have already been submitted and recorded.*

Dramatic Arts 801

Do you want to build your confidence? Learn to communicate more effectively, work collaboratively and build real connections with your peers? Do you want to learn about the world and your place in it, while developing your critical thinking and reflective skills? Dramatic Arts will help you grow in all of the "critical 21st

century skills" – through an immersive, fun,
practical course that will extend your creativity, your theatre-making skills and grow your strength and ability as a performer.

The Drama classroom is a safe and uplifting space. Each term we engage with a new performance mode or style through projects designed to extend our students' range and help grow them into the best performers that they can be.

This includes a holistic introduction to drama and performance, exploring improvisation skills, creating and developing characters, exploring scene analysis, staging and creating theatre for young people. You will learn to use your voice more effectively and engage in physical theatre forms, using movement and visual storytelling. You will also integrate technology into your learning through an exploration of scenic design, theatre sound and lighting and filmmaking. You will further develop and apply your skills through reading, studying, staging and performing play texts that have been chosen for their relevance to the societal and current issues that young people face.

Assessment is done through performance, reflection and application of skills learned. You will develop this through writing tasks that to explore your creative processes through reflexive and critical thinking. Creative design projects in which production portfolios and planning are taken on will further extend you as a theatre and filmmaker.

Students taking Dramatic Arts learn to take ownership of their own production experiences, working collaboratively to stage performances. In doing so, they will develop creative, conceptual and communicative muscle, becoming more confident in their own ability and the abilities of others.

Video link: Drama at Herschel
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sMQiJ-RAuEoQYNKtNIEM2k-i4lCjdZhd/view?usp=sharing

Music 801

Virtually every person, every day, experiences music. Every culture and/or religion in the world includes music in some form: for ceremony, relaxation, communication, celebration and enjoyment. The world would be inconceivable without music. In Core Music various aspects of thinking skills are developed.

Music is a fun course that explores many aspects of:
Theory - how to read, analyse and write (compose) music, General Music Knowledge - learning and understanding music from the past, present and the future, and Aural - training to really listen and understand music and sound. The course includes all elements of music, including the study of Jazz, Popular Music, Musical Theatre, Film Music and much more.

Playing an instrument/singing - Instrumental lessons will be taught on a one-on-one basis with a teacher who will be allocated to your daughter. Students may learn to play more than one instrument.

We also introduce our students to music and technology. They learn how to compose using various types of software. They may compose songs, dance music, instrumental pieces and film music.

Music in Grade 8 offers an avenue for stimulating creativity and self- expression and is an opportunity to develop potential. Our classes are small, fun and an opportunity for the learners to break away from the 'normal' school environment. Music stimulates the brain, creativity and teaches us skills that no other discipline can. It increases our ability to communicate better, to understand and appreciate different cultures and their music. Music teaches the brain to be more creative, analytical, to understand emotions and how to express oneself in a non-competitive environment.

Specific details regarding instrumental lessons (for either the core subject or extra-curricular lessons) will be emailed to you by the Admissions Department.

Visual Art 801

Visual Arts is not just about learning to draw, it's about learning to see, think, and respond to the world in new and meaningful ways. It's a space where we experiment with exciting materials and processes, explore ideas, and express our individuality through visual language.

In the art studio, students work with a wide range of materials, styles and techniques, from painting and drawing to sculpture, design, mixed media and digital art. Along the way, they develop their observation skills, think critically, take creative risks, and reflect thoughtfully on their choices. Visual Arts is rooted in curiosity, experimentation, and discovering personal ways of communicating through visuals and form.

We explore how visuals shape the way we understand identity and culture. Through a variety of practical projects students build their own visual language, they grow in creative confidence, deepen their ability to reflect, and sharpen skills such as problem-solving, interpretation and visual literacy.

Visual Arts nurtures skills that go far beyond the art room. Students learn to plan and revise, to work independently and collaboratively, and to approach challenges with flexibility and imagination. These transferable skills support students in many areas of life – from innovation to communication and critical engagement with the world.

This subject celebrates individuality and encourages thoughtful exploration in a supportive environment. Visual Arts allows students to bring their ideas to life through hands-on making. It also offers a space to grow as thinkers, makers, visual storytellers and creators.

Optional Semester Courses

** Note: Choosing an additional optional course in this learning community is not compulsory, but is recommended as a creative outlet. It also provides students with an opportunity to select a second The Arts option apart from the one chosen as a core subject.*

8CAE8: FROM PAGE TO THE STAGE

**Note: This course has a technology component and covers two learning areas, The Arts and Design&Technology.*

Audiences love to watch a good show on the stage - but what really goes into taking a play from the pages of the play text to the final product that the audience sees? In this course, students will work on taking a scripted drama from any genre and developing it towards performance in their own chosen space, for an audience. They will get involved in all facets of the production process, from devising the visual and thematic concept, to the casting and acting, directing and designing of the play. They will examine the roles that the behind-the-scenes players take on, getting involved in all aspects of production: theatre lighting and sound, makeup, costume, stage design, marketing and stage management. The course will culminate in the performance of the finished play.

8CAE9: SMART FILM MAKING – Semester 1 only

**Note: This course has a technology component and covers two learning areas, The Arts and Design&Technology.*

This course will explore the exciting process of filmmaking on a smartphone. The course will cover areas such as scriptwriting, mastering camera functions, planning visual storytelling, composition and camera shots, lighting, recording sound clearly, editing and overall production techniques. There will also be a short course on acting for the camera.
At the end of the module the learners will produce their own short film.
Course requirements: A smartphone and editing software such as iMovie or CapCut.

8CAE15: BEHIND THE CURTAIN – Semester 2 only

**Note: This course has a technology component and covers two learning areas, The Arts and Design&Technology.*

If exploring the intricacies of theatre design production intrigues you more than taking to the stage yourself, then this elective presents the ideal choice for you. This Elective focuses on creating and designing the major components of stagecraft while exploring the history of Art and Design. Learners will work on props, costumes, scenery, lighting, makeup, and special effects, learning how each element contributes to bringing a story to life on stage. Learners will develop research skills to visually recreate the historical context of a play, understanding its social, historical, and political influences. Discover the techniques that make theatre productions come alive behind the scenes.

8CAE4: MUSIC in MOTION 802

This course offers an engaging introduction to the many roles music plays in our lives, exploring its power to entertain, inspire, unite, and challenge. Students will begin by asking What is music? and examining how it shapes our everyday experiences. We will study rhythms from around the world, the role of protest music in driving social change, and the unique storytelling of musical theatre. The course also investigates the relationship between music and media, and how sound contributes to meaning across different platforms. Practical skills include learning to interpret musical notation, developing listening skills to understand sound, and creating original music using technology. Students will also explore instruments and their cultural significance, recognising how music carries the unique and underlying power to unite us all. Finally, we will highlight the numerous and varied career opportunities in the music industry, equipping students with insight into possible futures in performance, production, education, music therapy and beyond.

In Grade 8, students are introduced to the world of music through the study of basic music literacy, theory, and history. They will explore how music functions as both an art form and a language, gaining confidence in reading and writing musical notation. Learners are also introduced to musical theatre as a vibrant, collaborative genre that combines music, drama, and storytelling. Using GarageBand and podcasting software, students will begin to create their own projects, building both creative and technical skills. This foundation aims to spark curiosity, encourage creativity, and give students the tools to begin their musical journey.

8CAE6: LENS & LIGHT: Photography in Art – Optional Course

This semester course introduces students to photography as a powerful tool for artistic expression. Students will explore the basics of composition, light, and storytelling using digital cameras, while also experimenting with alternative photographic techniques such as cyanotypes. Alongside capturing images, they will learn digital editing techniques to enhance and transform their photos using photographic editing software. Through hands-on projects, they will discover how to "see like an artist," capturing mood and narrative in their images. The course blends practical photography technical skills with visual culture studies, connecting contemporary digital practices to the history of photography. By developing creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, problem-solving, and media literacy, students will cultivate essential 21st-century skills while completing the semester with a curated mini-portfolio and the experience of presenting their work.

INDIVIDUALS and SOCIETY

MANIFESTO

In our Learning Community - Individuals and Society, our collective focus is designed to promote an understanding of the forces that influence our world; past, present, and future, that are central to human advancement. As society has changed and continues to change, students will be equipped with the knowledge, critical thinking, and perspectives to interpret the shifts that have shaped our world and respond appropriately. By examining how people make decisions; how societies change over time; how resources are used and shared and how values guide human behaviour, pupils will discover the connections between individual choices and collective outcomes. Simultaneously, an emphasis on personal wellness, emotional intelligence, and self-understanding will ensure that students develop the resilience and interpersonal skills needed to make healthy choices and contribute meaningfully to society amid change.

LEARNING THREADS

1. Active Citizenship and Responsibility (sustainability):

- In Life Orientation: Understanding human rights vs responsibility. Introduction to community service and volunteering. Consumerism.
- In EMS: Understanding how economic and business decisions impact society and the environment, promoting sustainable choices for the future.
- In History: Encouraging civic responsibility and responsible leadership, including raising current social and environmental concerns (project-based learning to explore and promote action to solve a current problem in our community or city, e.g. culture and heritage.)
- In Consumers: Understanding the role of consumers as citizens, awareness of supporting the economy, contributing to social and environmental sustainability

2. Systems promoting Change and Continuity (Political and Economic):

- In Life Orientation: Understanding of democracy and nation building. Change from apartheid SA to new democracy.
- In EMS: Examining political and economic systems and understanding the structures and practices that drive change.
- In History; Examining the impact of industrialisation and technology on society over time e.g. systemic discrimination and its impact on marginalised groups, adaptation of ideologies, e.g. socialism and capitalism. (Using timelines, primary sources, current events, sources from the media and understanding change within context of time.)
- In Consumers: Understanding the impact of capitalism, including inflation and the cost of credit on the standard of living of consumers; and the impact of food security on the nation.

3. Entrepreneurship:

- In Life Orientation: time management, goal setting and organisational skills, grit and growth mindset.
- In EMS: Using market research tools to identify opportunities, develop business ideas and satisfy needs and wants.
- In Consumers: developing an understanding of the marketplace, identifying gaps in the market in order to develop a product to fill the gap and fulfill consumer needs and wants.

4. **Personal Wellness:**

- In Life Orientation: Mental health awareness, mindfulness, coping strategies, the addiction cycle and substances, self-esteem – influences on self-esteem, strategies to build self-esteem.
- In EMS: Building financial confidence and responsible decision-making skills.
- In History: Development of empathy and understanding of human relationships to promote humanitarian action.
- In Consumers: Understanding of the responsibility of consumer in ensuring that they make good choices with regard to their health

5. **Cause and Effect;**

- In Life Orientation: Social media – decisions and impacts. Addiction – impact of choices and lifestyle.
- In EMS: Exploring supply and demand, trade cycles, and economic choices, to understand how decisions and events influence economic outcomes.
- In History: Examining the causes and effects of political, social and economic systems, such as apartheid, and its impact on our city of Cape Town (Current challenges e.g. spatial development, integration, housing, transport, education, etc)
- In Consumers: Understanding the impact of changes in the world, on our role as consumers; how social media and technology influence choices made by consumers

HISTORY – Compulsory – Select atleast ONE – Semester Courses

8HSSH4: 'WOMEN RISE!'

"Each time a woman stands up for herself, without knowing it possibly, without claiming it, she stands up for all women." Maya Angelou (an American poet, author and civil rights activist).
Using historical investigative skills, you will engage with thought-provoking questions around women's issues, identity and the obstacles to legitimate transformation. Your studies will explore women's various places and roles in societies during the 20th century, including South African society. This course will cover a range of transferable skills which will increase your understanding and extend your knowledge about the journey of different women's liberation struggles. It will include the difficulties faced by different women and how pioneering women challenged the gender mindsets and practices of their time. We will compare their experiences to the position of women currently and assess the degree to which gender equality has been secured.

8HSSH5: TRAVELLING IN AFRICA: From Ancient Empires to Modern Times

Curious about our continent? This course offers you a chance to explore the incredible history of Africa by 'travelling' through it, both in time and space. We 'visit' the glorious histories of African kings and queens, civilisation and states from ancient times to the eve of European colonialism. As we 'journey' through the continent, we will also meet ordinary people doing extraordinary things. We will explore their art, technology, culture and ideas and explore the significance of salt, gold, iron and clay. We will learn how Africans and Europeans encounter each other - and unpick the complex forces that this sets in motion. Historical thinking and writing skills are prioritised, but this course will appeal to students who love dynamic, project-based learning and creative tasks. You will leave enriched and empowered.

8HSSH9: MAKINGS of the MODERN WORLD

What role has human innovation, machines and technology played in shaping our modern-day world? This course explores the makings of the modern world by providing a framework in which major historical events of the 20th century can be best understood. We will explore a wide variety of themes and historical processes that have shaped the modern world, by looking at the evolution of technology from the Industrial Revolution in the 19th century into the 20th century, and by exploring the transformational, creative power of technology on society through WWI and WWII. We will focus on the challenges of warfare in WWI (trench warfare), considering the intersection between the demands of war, inventions and innovation. Our journey will continue to explore the impact of technology on society between WWI and WWII considering the benefits and challenges of technology. Consideration of the transformation in our communications, mobility and automation will afford learners the opportunity to explore the transition from a mechanical to an electronic world. This exciting course will appeal to students interested in social history and will deepen their critical thinking and writing skills.

8HSSH7: ECHOES of CAPE TOWN: A Journey through Time

Step back in time and uncover the rich stories of Cape Town's history in this engaging course. From the early days of the VOC Dutch East India Company to the vibrant, modern city it is today, we'll explore iconic sites such as the Castle

of Good Hope, the Slave Lodge, the colourful Bo-Kaap, and the remnants of the Lion Zoo on Table Mountain's slopes. Discover who built these places, the stories they hold, and how they have shaped Cape Town's unique identity. Join us as we delve into the past to better understand the present, bringing history to life through the tales of those who walked these streets before us.

8HSSH6: WATHINT'IMBOKODO: YOU STRIKE A WOMAN – YOU STRIKE A ROCK'

This course will explore the major turning points of South Africa's apartheid past, through the lives of some of the iconic women who shaped the history of their times. This is an course about women who asked difficult questions, who spoke truth to power, defied injustice and fought for freedom. The personal stories of these iconic figures provide us with a lens into our country's history and how people's lives were impacted. The course celebrates the courage, determination and complexity of key figures such as Lilian Ngoyi, Fatima Meer, Ruth First, Francis Ames and Winnie Mandela, whilst also recognising the everyday heroism of ordinary women doing extraordinary things. We will also explore the bigger, difficult questions of how the history of women is written, and interrogate some of the sexism and assumptions that continue to shape how women's history is written. This is a course perfect for any student interested in issues such as social history, social justice, feminism, gender and language.

(A pupil needs to take atleast 3 HSS (History HSSH and Geography HSSG) courses in their Grade 8 Year.)

LIFE ORIENTATION - Compulsory – Year Course

As a compulsory subject right up to Matric level, Life Orientation is pivotal to the holistic development of our students. It guides and prepares our students for life's possibilities in a rapidly transforming society and ensures that they are well equipped with the personal, social, intellectual and emotional skills needed to navigate their chosen paths.

Life Orientation specifically aims to develop skills that allow our students to respond positively to challenges and to play an active role in the economy, environment and society at large. We teach our students to exercise their constitutional rights and responsibilities whilst being mindful to respect the rights of others. Students are guided to making informed and responsible decisions about their personal health, the environment as well as further studies and careers. We also grapple with issues relevant to the teenage experience.

In the GET phase at Herschel, the Life Orientation curriculum is delivered in modules. In Grade 8, the following modules are covered, which each aim to develop specific skills and/ or impart pertinent content knowledge:

- Social media
- Relationships
- Addiction
- Nation building
- Human Rights
- Effective learning strategies
- Global health

Assessment is both formal and informal and may make use of verbal feedback or surveys. Many modules are too personal to be assessed, however, Controlled Tests are written in Terms 2 and 4 while tasks are administered in Terms 1 and 3. Reporting will be done on a semester basis.

ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT SCIENCES – Compulsory – Select atleast ONE

8EMS1: TRANSACTIONS in ACTION

This is a compulsory course if you are wanting to take Accounting in Grade 10.

Follow the flow of money through the business: from transaction initiation to recording in the financial records of the business. Students learn about different types of businesses within the formal and informal sector. We investigate the different ways of making payments, card facilities and source documents used by businesses and basic accounting concepts. Using these skills students will interpret transactions and, using basic bookkeeping skills, process and record cash transactions in the financial records of the business. Students will investigate various business ideas, explore options of saving and investing as well as sourcing capital.

8EMS2: ECONO-BIZ

This course offers insight into the world of economic and management sciences. Students will explore key topics such as the government, the national budget, the standard of living, and how markets function. They will learn about the factors of production, different forms of ownership, and essential management principles. By examining these areas, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of how economies operate and how businesses are managed, preparing them for

future studies and fostering an early interest in economic and entrepreneurial pursuits.

RESEARCH SKILLS – Compulsory - Semester Course
practical tools for navigating research, thinking and writing.

The Grade 8s will systematically, diligently and carefully work through a six-step process based on the 'Big6' model developed by Mike Eisenberg and Bob Berkowitz (1987). This model is designed to help students to develop the skills and understanding that they need to find, process, assess, authenticate and use information effectively in order to write a research essay.

This includes: understanding a complex question, doing research, organising relevant information into a logical format, writing an academic essay, including proper referencing and understanding the importance of integrity throughout this process. We will make use of many types of information sources, available electronically and in the school's Baxter Resource Centre.

THE BIG 6

(LIBGUIDETEAM, 2017. BIG6 - Information Literacy Model. VGU Library. Available: https://vgulibguide.wordpress.com/info-literacy-skills/big6-model/, [Accessed on 15 October, 2021)

DESIGN and TECHNOLOGY

MANIFESTO

At the heart of innovation lies the ability to imagine, design, and build solutions that shape our world—physically, digitally, and ethically. The Design and Technology Learning Community cultivates the creative confidence, technical fluency, and ethical awareness needed to thrive in a rapidly evolving global landscape.

We believe that design, coding, and digital literacy are not just technical skills but essential tools for agency, expression, and responsible innovation. Through our subjects, pupils will develop the ability to think critically, create purposefully, and engage ethically equipping them to solve real-world problems and contribute meaningfully to their communities and beyond.

By choosing subjects from this faculty, pupils will:

- Think like designers – Explore human-centered design, prototype solutions, and iterate creatively to meet real needs.
- Code like technologists – Apply computational thinking to build smart systems, automate tasks, and solve problems with precision.
- Act like digital citizens – Navigate digital spaces responsibly, communicate effectively, and reflect on the ethical impact of technology.

LEARNING THREADS:

1. **Innovation & Problem-Solving**
   - Design: Human-centered design, prototyping, iterative development
     Projects focused on sustainability, accessibility, and user experience
   - IT: Algorithmic problem-solving, software development, automation
     Building apps or systems to address real-world needs
   - Digital Literacy: Using digital tools to research, plan, and present solutions
     Integrating multimedia and data to communicate ideas effectively

2. **Systems & Interactions**

- Design: Mechanical systems, feedback loops, product efficacy
  Understanding how design choices affect system performance
- IT: Programming logic, hardware-software integration
  Creating interactive systems (e.g., gears, sensors, microcontrollers)
- Digital Literacy: Exploring digital platforms and networks
  Understanding how digital systems (e.g., cloud, social media) interact

3. **Ethics & Impact**

- Design: Sustainable materials, inclusive design, environmental impact
- IT: Data privacy, cybersecurity, algorithmic bias
  Social implications of technology
- Digital Literacy: Responsible online behaviour, digital footprint, misinformation
  Reflecting on the societal impact of digital media
  Debates on ethical use of AI and emerging technologies

4. **Creativity & Expression**

- Design: Branding, aesthetic development
  Exploring form, function, and emotional impact
- IT: Creative coding (e.g., generative art, interactive media)
  Building digital experiences (games, simulations)
- Digital Literacy: Multimedia creation (video, audio, graphics)
  Digital publishing and presentation tools

Compulsory – Select at least ONE Semester course

8TECH2: Tech in Motion – Drones, Design & Sensors

Exploring Digital Fabrication, Flight, and Smart Sensors

This course integrates Design & Technology with Digital Technologies, offering Grade 8 pupils a hands-on exploration of emerging tools that shape the future of innovation. Pupils will learn how to design, render, and 3D print components that enhance robots designed and built in Toy-tronics, while also gaining foundational skills in drone operation and microsensor programming. This course is ideal for anyone who enjoys building, coding, and experimenting with real-world tech.

Key Learning Areas:

1. 3D Design & Printing

Students will use CAD software to design robot parts and accessories, learning how to prepare files for 3D printing and troubleshoot common issues. They'll explore material properties, print settings, and post-processing techniques.

2. Drone Flight Fundamentals

Learners will be introduced to the physics of flight, drone safety, and basic piloting skills. Through simulation and hands-on practice, they'll understand how drones are used in industries like agriculture, filmmaking, and search & rescue.

3. Microsensors & Coding

Students will work with microcontrollers (e.g., Micro:bit) to program sensors that respond to light, motion, or sound.

Skills Developed:

- Digital design and fabrication
- Basic electronics and coding
- Systems thinking and troubleshooting
- Safe and responsible drone usage
- Collaboration and iterative design

By the end of the course, students will have:

- Rendered and printed custom robot components
- Piloted a drone through a basic obstacle course
- Programmed sensors to understand their environment better

This course encourages creative problem-solving, technical fluency, and future-ready thinking, preparing students to be confident makers and innovators.

8TECH6: TOY-TRONICS: From Design to Motion: Exploring Product Design and Robotics

**Note: This course has a technology component and covers two learning areas, The Arts and Design &Technology.*

Step into the world of **Toy-tronics**, a vibrant and hands-on course where creativity meets engineering. Designed for curious and inventive Grade 8 students, this course explores the exciting intersection of product design and mechanical systems.

Students will embark on a journey through the Design Process, learning how to transform ideas into tangible creations. Inspired by 1950s Japanese robots, students will conceptualise and craft their own papier mâché toy robots, bringing them to life with painted finishes and retrofitted mechanical components such as gears, levers, and articulated joints.

Throughout the semester, learners will engage in:

- Problem-solving and ideation
- Sketching and prototyping
- Material selection and construction techniques
- Systems and controls for basic movement

By the end of the course, students will have designed, built, and mechanised their own robot toy—an imaginative fusion of form and function. This experience not only nurtures artistic and technical skills but also encourages students to think like designers, engineers, and storytellers.

Toy-tronics offers a rich blend of creativity, innovation, and practical know-how, making it an ideal choice for students eager to explore the future of design through the lens of playful invention.

8CAE9: SMART FILM MAKING

See p. 31 for details

8CAE8: FROM PAGE to the STAGE

See p. 31 for details

8CAE15: BEHIND the CURTAIN

See p. 32 for details

DIGITAL LITERACY – Compulsory – Semester Course

This course is your gateway to the world of technology, designed to be fun, hands-on, and packed with skills that will set you apart. In Digital Foundations, you'll explore the tools and technologies that shape how we live, learn, and work—giving you a head start on your tech journey.

You'll build digital literacy by learning how to manage your online footprint, protect your identity, and understand cybersecurity in everyday life. You'll also dive into Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint to create eBooks, blogs, and presentations, and to analyse data from your projects. As part of your creative journey, you'll be introduced to 3D printing, designing simple digital artefacts and seeing them come to life. You'll also explore coding and AI through Minecraft Education, where you'll solve challenges and build smart systems in a playful, interactive world.

We're already living in the 5th Industrial Revolution, and this course ensures your skills are up to date with what the future demands. Whether you're interested in design, coding, storytelling, or innovation, building your digital skills gives you the tools to create, explore, and lead.

GRADE 8 CURRICULUM SELECTION

Note to students: Please read the following points before selecting your courses:

- Remember that this is **not a subject choice** for your senior grades: you will choose your subjects at the beginning of Term 3 in Grade 9 for Grade 10 2027.
- Read carefully and choose your courses according to the instructions.
- There are a number of compulsory courses. Some of the compulsory courses you have a choice of your selection. You will rank your order of preference in these courses.
- Select the **courses** from each other **Learning Community**. You will select courses from Sciences: HSSG, Individuals and Societies: HSSH, EMS and Design and Technology.
- You have to take a Geography HSSG, History HSSH, TECH and EMS course. You will be allocated either two HSSH or HSSG courses.
- These courses will be divided over the two semesters of Grade 8.
- So you have 5 courses which you have to select.
- You have one additional optional course you can select from any of the Learning Communities or French or Conversational isiXhosa
- If you are considering taking **French in Grade 10**, you need to have completed French Beginners in Grade 8.
- If you are considering taking **Accounting in Grade 10**, you need to have completed Transactions in Action in Grade 8 and *IOU in Grade 9*. Please note - you cannot enrol for *IOU* if you did not successfully complete Bank-It.
- You may **not repeat** any course.
- If there is a problem with your selection when these are sent out to your parents/guardians, please see Ms East as soon as possible and before the end of Term 4.
- Please understand that classes are limited in size.
- The online form needs to be submitted by **27 October 2025**.

THE THREE LINES OF COURSES

COURSE ONE	
8HSSH7	Echoes of Cape Town: A Journey through Time
8HSSH4	'Women Rise!'
8HSSG9	Close the gaps with Maps
8HSSG3	Sunshine and Snow … be the first to know…
8EMS2	Econo-Biz
8EMS1	Transactions in Action (Prerequisite for Grade 9 IOU Course and 10 Acc) semester 2 only
8CAE4	Music in Motion 802
8CAE9	Smart Filmmaking (Tech) Semester 1 only
8SAL1	French for Beginners *(Prerequisite for Grade 9 and Grade 10 French)*

COURSE TWO	
8TECH6	Toy-Tronics (CAE)
8CAE9	Smart Filmmaking (Tech) Semester 1 only
8CAE15	Behind the curtain (Tech) Semester 2 only
8TECH2	Tech in Motion
8HSSH9	Makings of the Modern World
8HSSH5	Travelling in Africa: From Ancient Empires to Modern Times
8HSSH4	'Women Rise!'
8EMS2	Econo-Biz
8HSSG9	Close the Gaps with Maps

COURSE THREE	
8SAL1	French for Beginners *(Prerequisite for Grade 9 and Grade 10 French)*
8SAL2	Thetha Nathi – Conversational isiXhosa
8TECH6	Toy-Tronics (CAE)
8CAE8	From the page to the stage (Tech)
8CAE6	Lens and Light – Photography in Art
8HSSG6	A Journey Through Time to the Anthropocene
8EMS1	Transactions in Action (Prerequisite for Grade 9 IOU Course and 10 Acc)
8HSSH6	Wathint'imbokodo: You strike a woman – you strike a rock'

INTEGRATED FOCUS DAYS

These are a new addition to the curriculum offering and take place on selected week B Fridays. They are the new and improved version of the Single Focus Days. While there will still be some Single Focus Days, the other week B Fridays will involve integrated learning days.

This collaborative inter-disciplinary learning opportunity will allow us to expose the pupils to problem solving and solution finding with real world applications; peaking their curiosity and providing opportunities for inquiry.

Pupils will have developed skills and learnt content or learnt how to access knowledge in their learning areas and these will be transferred to their projects to allow for conceptual development. AI, Data Competencies and ICT integration will be skills and tools that are central to these projects.

These learning opportunities will assist the pupils in developing a deeper understanding of the interconnected nature of knowledge and develop the competency of how to transfer skills.

ASSESSMENT IN GRADE 8

Herschel academic staff support assessment that is appropriate, functional and meaningful. The principle of ‘assessment for learning’ is more important than ‘assessment of learning’. Skills-based education as a principle does not mean that content knowledge is not important, but is viewed as key to a basic education at Herschel. This will enable students to cope well with life and work beyond school.

All subjects will be assessed throughout their duration by means of continuous assessment. Both formative and summative assessment will be part of a series of different types of assessment throughout both semesters. Practical components of courses will be assessed in appropriate ways. Different tasks and tests will be weighted according to their significance and the skills which are demonstrated by the students when they complete the tasks.

There will **not** be an emphasis on rote learning or over-measurement. As the curriculum is based on content knowledge as well as skills, both aspects will be covered in varying degrees depending on the nature of the course that has been selected. Continuous assessment will be conducted in all subjects and courses and

cover a range of different types, for e.g. practical tasks, orals, projects, research tasks, tests, group work, exercises, thinking maps, etc.

Assessment is based on sound educational principles. Every effort will be made to coordinate assessment to avoid overloading students. Detailed reports will be issued at the end of Term 1 and 3 but a brief report will be sent to parents at the end of Semester 1 and Semester 2. Staff are always accessible to discuss your daughter's progress

We do understand that our Grade 8 (and 9) curriculum is very different and all the information and making this decision is overwhelming.

Perhaps a possible way to tackle making this decision, could be

1. Start by reading about the various courses in the booklets and have a look at the form. https://forms.office.com/r/CgmL5aB36p

2. Take not of the compulsory courses where you do not have option for selection.

3. Start by just highlighting which of the courses, where you have an option to choose, grab your immediate attention.

4. Look at the highlighted courses, and ensure you have one of each of the following HSSH, HSSG, EMS and TECH.

5. Rank your interest in the courses where you have the option of choice in each Learning Community with numbers of preference.

6. Think about whether you want to explore studying French later on at high school. If so highlight and circle that in the list in the booklet.

7. Think about whether you want to explore studying Accounting later on at high school. If so highlight Transactions in Action in the list in the booklet.

Please do not hesitate to contact myself, Kerri-Lyn East keast@herschel.org.za if you would like to discuss this further.

"YOU CAN TEACH A STUDENT
A LESSON FOR A DAY,
BUT IF YOU CAN TEACH HER
TO LEARN BY CREATING CURIOSITY,
SHE WILL CONTINUE
THE LEARNING PROCESS
AS LONG AS SHE LIVES."

~ CLAY P. BEDFORD ~