



Dear Parents

September 2020

Subject choice for those entering Grade 8 in 2021

Grade 8 offers a wonderful change in academic engagement, starting the journey to matric with a shift to greater abstract and conceptual thinking. In terms of the breadth of subjects taken in Grade 8, it is a continuation of the Senior Phase started in Grade 7.

At Bishops the subject Arts & Culture requires the boys to choose a specific course. While some schools offer this as a broad arts subject, because we offer a number of arts and language subjects through to matric, we require an early choice of one of the subjects: French, IsiXhosa, Music, Art or Drama. Accordingly, each boy should opt for one of those five courses, which is then his Arts & Culture component. Please see page 2 to 5 for more detail about each course. In particular, note the difference between Music I and Music 2. French or IsiXhosa beginners can be accommodated as well as those with previous experience.

There are some boys, who are immigrants, who have exemption from the second official language requirement, and in most cases, they study French. Those boys would not take Arts & Culture:French, but would opt for one of the other courses. Most other boys will take Afrikaans as their additional language, and some may opt for IsiXhosa as their additional South African Language. This is not encouraged if they are new in the subject as it is at First Additional Language level. If they do offer it, they may not also offer it in the Arts & Culture component.

We require a decision about which course your son will choose for Arts & Culture.

The maximum number of boys that can be accommodated in any one course is 50, and if more than that apply, then boys will unfortunately have to be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis. In the case of Music II, the maximum number of boys that can be accommodated is 20. While the associated subjects (not Music II) can be continued in Grade 10 and beyond, it is perfectly normal for a boy to take one for the richness of the learning opportunity and then not after Grade 9.

Please indicate your preferences on the online form by Wednesday 16 September 2020. If you have any queries or issues you would like to talk through, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours in learning,

Michelle van Schalkwyk (Mrs)

DEPUTY HEAD: ACADEMICS

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ARTS & CULTURE

Grades 8 & 9

At Bishops the subject, Arts and Culture, is divided into five separate courses and all pupils have to choose one of them:

Art, Drama, French, IsiXhosa or Music.

Art, Drama, French, IsiXhosa and Music 1 may be continued to Grade 12, but Music II is only offered through to Grade 9. Below is a short explanation of what the pupils can expect in each course: if further details are required, please approach the staff member indicated. While it is possible to change course during the two years, this is ill advised because it limits the richness of the experience since most boys do not take these subjects to Matric.

ART:

The Grade 8 boys are introduced to the formal elements: line, tone, texture, shape and colour, and also to a variety of art disciplines and techniques. These include drawing, painting and sculpture.

In Grade 9, practical projects focus initially on perspective, both linear and atmospheric, explored using both drawing and painting techniques. The focus in the second half of the year is on depicting the human form and portraiture.

There is a practical examination for both Grades 8 and 9 (either painting or drawing) in May/June and in November, and this provides an important indicator of the level attained in the course. The overall mark for both mid-year and in November is derived from coursework (60%), with the practical examination counting for the other 40%.

Using a sketchbook is an integral part of the course, and regular homework assignments provide the boys with opportunities to practise their drawing skills and explore key concepts and principles of art. The outline of course content for each term can be found on the Bishops Visual Arts intranet site.

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DRAMATIC

ARTS:

This course seeks to develop critical thinking, and to hone the skills needed to work collaboratively, creatively and confidently, while developing an appreciation for the dramatic arts.

At Grade 8 level, the learners are introduced to: basic warm-up techniques; improvisation; African folktales; physical theatre; performance spaces; workshop theatre; praise poetry; script-writing and performance; comedy, tragedy and mime; dance composition and the research and performance of a monologue.

The Grade 9 course expands on the previous year's experiences by including: performance mechanics; a study of Elizabethan theatre; Slam poetry; stereotypes and stock characters; ritual, ceremony and symbol; an appreciation and analysis of film; characterisation and dialogues; dance composition and the research and performance of a monologue.

Continuous Assessment is based on both practical and theoretical applications, and a formal practical and theory exam at the culmination of each semester.

Wayne Tucker wtucker@bishops.org.za

FRENCH:

This course enables boys to be exposed to the second most spoken language in Africa and is beneficial for their possible future interactions with French-speaking individuals in all walks of life, from the business world to University and beyond.

A communicative approach is used, supported by a textbook with CDs, the use of computer technology and online websites, in order to give the learners the necessary language skills. They get exposed to French culture, its geography and way of life through songs and presentations. Boys can join the French cine-club that takes place once a term and sample some French cuisine.

In Grade 8, the topics covered include (but are not limited to): greetings, numbers, family, animals, clothes, school, time, likes and dislikes, giving personal information.

The Grade 9 course expands on the previous year's content and continues to use computer technology for the boys to practise and produce their work. The topics covered include, holidays and travel, shopping, ordering food and drinks, leisure activities, recounting events in the past, present and future tenses.

Our exams sessions include a French written exam and an oral exam. Our pupils are also regularly evaluated throughout the year. They can elect to sit the DELF (Elementary Diploma of French as a Foreign Language), written under the auspices of the Alliance Française.

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IsiXHOSA:

Our studies in isiXhosa are designed to enable scholars to: acquire the language skills necessary to communicate appropriately; focus on listening, speaking, reading and writing; use IsiXhosa as a language and at the same time learn about the culture of the 'Amaxhosa'; learn more about the traditional 'lintsomi' (short stories) as part of literature.

Boys develop vocabulary, learn how to form sentences and eventually write shorter paragraphs and dialogues. Emphasis is on a relaxed environment to encourage boys to be listening, speaking, reading as well as writing IsiXhosa with confidence and enjoyment. From the third term Grade 8s use laptops to create advertisements and flyers as well as homework assignments such as dialogues and picture labelling.

The Grade 9 course expands on the previous year's content and continues to use computer technology for the boys to practise and produce their work. The topics covered include physical descriptions, holidays, shopping, ordering food and drinks, leisure activities.

A formal written exam and an oral exam are undertaken at the end of each year while regular evaluation takes place during lesson times.

IsiXhosa as an Additional Language is offered at Bishops to Matric. It will give each and every boy the ability and opportunity to communicate in IsiXhosa, not only in the Western Cape, but in so many other beautiful parts of our country.

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MUSIC:

Music is offered as two different options. Both courses will include general music and arts appreciation, and music technology. Pupils will be required to attend internal lunchtime concerts as part of their musical experience and development.

Music 1: available only to pupils who have completed Grade 2 level on their instrument of choice. Each pupil would be required to have 1-hour lessons each week on his instrument (but 30-minute lessons for voice) charged at only 50% of the normal cost for Music lessons. Boys choosing this option MUST also complete a Music Lesson Application form.

Pupils will be taken through a comprehensive music theoretical course and aural training. Music technology and enrichment (where a variety of musically-related topics are covered, including some basic music history) are also part of this course.

Practical and written exams take place in June and November; the practical exam counts 50% of the total mark. Continuous assessment is ongoing throughout the year.

Music 2: no previous practical experience is necessary, and pupils will not need to have individual practical music lessons. The course consists of 3 parts – Content, (which covers such topics as general styles of music, video game music, instruments and an emphasis on 21st century skills), Marimbas (pupils will be involved in a group lesson once a week) and Technology (pupils will engage with various music software to create pieces.) A written exam takes place in June and November. Continuous assessment is ongoing throughout the year.

A maximum of 20 boys can be accepted for this course, and selection will be on a first-come-first-served basis.

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