Introduction

Notre Dame College aims to instil a love of lifelong learning in each of our students and also equip them to be good citizens in a rapidly changing world. Students in Year 8 will continue to experience a range of subjects from each of the Learning Areas, building on from the Year 7 programme. Students will undertake 8 core subjects as well as have the opportunity to select subjects of their own choice from the Arts and Technologies Learning Areas. Project-Based Learning (PBL) is the educational approach in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to complex questions, problems, or challenge. Students will engage in rigorous projects related to the themes of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) and Humanities and Social Science (HASS). This handbook provides a guide to the Year 8 Programme at Notre Dame College. If you have any difficulty using this guide, or have any questions, please contact the staff listed throughout the subject handbook. Best wishes for a successful year at Notre Dame College.

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Subject Selections Online
Subject selections are to be made online by students using Web Preferences. Students should ensure they complete their subject selections by the due date to have the best chance of being allocated to subjects of their choice. However, students’ subject selections will not be valid until all the required re-enrolment documentation and Web Preference Receipt has been submitted to the College.

Course Restrictions
The availability of any subject is dependent upon sufficient numbers of students wishing to undertake that subject. Some subjects also have limits on class size.

Re-enrolment
If students are unsure about returning to Notre Dame College, we would ask them to please complete the subject selection process online just in case they do return.

Year 8 Camp
The year 8 camp is a three day/two night outdoor education experience. It is held at Valley Homestead near Myrtleford and aims to develop our students’ resilience, persistence and teamwork. It also prepares students for the Outdoor Learning Programme in Year 9. Students complete activities such as hiking, bush cooking, abseiling, climbing and flying fox.
Core Subjects
All Year 8 students undertake the following core subjects:
• Religious Education
• English
• Mathematics
• Health and Physical Education
• Humanities
• Languages (Italian Or Japanese)
• Project Based Learning (STEM and HASS)
• Science

Elective Subjects
Year 8 students also complete two electives each semester. This is a total of four electives for the year - two from each of the following:
• The Arts
• Technologies

Lessons Per Fortnight
Each elective runs for 6 lessons per fortnight cycle and for six months in duration. Students are not permitted to select or study the same elective twice.

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Students begin deepening their understanding of Jesus and themselves. We look at Jesus in two ways. Firstly, as the historical figure, examining his cultural history, the Roman occupation of Judea and provide students with a context for Jesus’ birth, life, death and resurrection. Then we look at Jesus as the Christ – the Messiah, His divinity and how He is alive today, calling us into an encounter with Him. We look at Jesus’ parables of the Kingdom, particularly the Sower and the Seed and the Wheat and the Tares. Then the most central Christian premise - the resurrection, and how this can make a difference in both this life and the next. By looking at what the cross of Christ calls us to, students are invited to see that they are part of a much bigger story, helping “His kingdom come on Earth as it is in Heaven”. Students will also question their own desires and motivations, asking themselves, “What is a good life?” and “Where are the choices I’m making now taking me?”

English is at the core of the curriculum because it enables students to become effective communicators in an increasingly connected world. Developing from the foundations of Year 7, students will engage deeply with their studied texts, honing their ability to write analytically, comparatively, persuasively and creatively. In addition to written assessments they will also deliver oral presentations, actively enhancing their communication skills. Students will engage with a variety of fictional texts: Tomorrow When The War Began – John Marsden (novel), The Rabbits – John Marsden & Shaun Tan (picture book) and The Sapphires - Wayne Blair (film). They will also develop the critical skill of understanding persuasion in the media. From their study of how language is used in different contexts, for different purposes, they will also develop the ability to write creatively in response to a studied text.

Maths Pathway is a computer based programme that supports the way mathematics is taught in schools. The teaching model is research-driven and has been developed to support success for all students in mathematics. In the classroom, students will be tested at their current levels of understanding across the Curriculum. This is done so that their education programme is tailored to their needs. In class, the students and teacher work together in regular learning cycles to increase math skill. There is an emphasis on student development and growth, with effort and accuracy being a focus.

In Year 8 Science, students build on their scientific knowledge and inquiry skills. Students complete one topic in each of the following areas; biological science, physical science, chemical science and earth science. Students investigate forms of energy such as light and sound. They explain how energy can be transferred and transformed. Students also apply the particle model to explain the properties of matter. They investigate differences between physical changes and chemical reactions and complete a series of experiments to record evidence of chemical change. Students will learn how to represent reactions as simple word equations. In Science, students also plan their own practical investigations. This includes designing, conducting and presenting their findings. For biology, students use microscopes to investigate a variety of cells. They discuss cell structure and function and investigate how cells work together to create organs and how organs work together to form body systems. Students complete a heart dissection to build on their understanding of the circulatory system. They also complete a more detailed study of the reproductive system. Students investigate the rock cycle including the various rock forming processes. The sustainable use of resources such as fossil fuels is also considered in this area of study.
Health and Physical Education

Students will cover both practical (Physical Education) and theoretical (Health) components across the entire year. Students will develop motor skills through a variety of practical activities including netball, volleyball, badminton, football codes and fitness testing. Practical assessment is ongoing and takes into account teamwork, a willingness to participate, persistence and the development of both strategy and skills. In regards to health, a variety of topics will be covered including: respectful relationships, fitness and the effects of alcohol and other recreational drugs.

Year 8 Humanities consists of Civics and Citizenship, Economics and Business, Geography and History. Students develop increasing independence in critical thinking and skill application, which includes questioning, researching, analysing, evaluating, communicating and reflecting. They apply these skills to investigate events, developments and issues both historical and contemporary.

Civics and Citizenship - Students continue to build on their understanding of the concepts of the Westminster system, democracy and participation. They investigate the types of law in Australia and how they are made. They consider the responsibilities and freedoms of citizens, and how Australians can actively participate in their democracy. Students explore the different perspectives of Australian identity.

Economics and Business - The concept of markets is introduced to further develop students understanding of the concepts of interdependence, making choices and allocation. They consider how markets work and the rights, responsibilities and opportunities that arise for businesses, consumers and governments. Work and work futures are explored as students consider the influences on the way people work now and consider how people will work in the future. Students focus on national and regional issues, with opportunities for the concepts to also be considered in relation to local community, or global, issues where appropriate.

Geography - The concepts of place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability and change continue to be developed as a way of thinking and provide students with the opportunity to inquire into the significance of landscapes to people and the spatial change in the distribution of populations. They apply this understanding to a wide range of places and environments at the full range of scales, from local to global, and in a range of locations.

History - Students develop their historical understanding through key concepts, including evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy, significance and contestability. These concepts are investigated within the historical context of the Middle Ages & Early Exploration. They consider how societies changed, what key beliefs and values emerged, and the causes and effects of contact between societies in this period.

Year 8 Italian is a prerequisite for studying Year 9 Italian. Italian is a rewarding language to learn as it opens up the riches of Italy’s cultural past and its dynamic present. Using the communicative approach, students focus on the development of pronunciation, grammar and practical vocabulary. Students will learn useful phrases and develop skills to allow them to take part in simple conversations, and read and write simple sentences covering a range of everyday topics in Italian.

Students will continue their study of Italian or Japanese in Year 8
Year 8 Japanese is a prerequisite for studying Year 9 Japanese. Students will continue to develop their Japanese speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. They will learn about Japanese culture and traditions, people, society and history, comparing their own lives to the life of a teenager in modern Japan. Students will become proficient in reading and writing the Hiragana script and be introduced to the Katakana and Kanji scripts. This course will concentrate on developing the students’ communication skills, focusing on practical vocabulary and useful phrases.

Project Based Learning (PBL) at Notre Dame College aims to ensure that Notre Dame College students are offered an excellent contemporary curriculum, which allows them to achieve their personal best and access appropriate pathways beyond school. While completing their PBL subject students will engage with current, real-world problems and work to design a potential solution. Students will develop skills in teamwork, critical and creative thinking, and ethical and intercultural understanding. The PBL focus at Year 8 will be STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) for one Semester and HASS (Humanities and Social Science) for the other semester.
In Digital Technologies students will have the opportunity to experience working with a variety of digital platforms while solving a number of problems. Over time students will design increasingly complex solutions to information problems. This shall be done using an array of different software applications and through the use of a graphic programming language and a general purpose programming language. While solving these information problems students will apply systems thinking to develop and evaluate their own and others’ existing solutions. Most often students will work in project development teams which will manage the sharing of ideas and information, provide feedback within the group and monitor their own progress.

This subject aims for students to continue investigating the kitchen and its equipment and build on the skills they developed in Year 7. Students will increase their awareness of safe and hygienic working procedures in the kitchen, and use more complex utensils, equipment and appliances. Students will have a production (cooking) and a theory class each week. They will continue to analyse how characteristics and properties of food determine practical preparation techniques and presentation when creating solutions for healthy eating. Students will also work both individually and in pairs to create a variety of food items including dishes for breakfast, lunch, dinner and meals for families. They will also make healthy snacks and focus on sustainable cookery. A major assignment will include planning, producing and evaluating a meal for their family. Students will also need to consider social, ethical, and economic and sustainability factors, especially when creating designed solutions.

The learning undertaken follows the Product and Design Process. Various styles of learning can be achieved using the practical based hands on tasks. The knowledge gained doing the practical tasks is complemented with collation of information for a folio. The learning is in a safe and encouraging environment with the focus being about using different materials to make small usable metal projects from sustainable materials. Hand tools, metal folders and drilling machines are used to manufacture and assemble the projects that can be used for many years to come.

In this subject, students are introduced to electrical, electronic and mechanical systems. Students explore how systems are made, tested and used in a practical way. Students apply their knowledge by completing practical tasks such as; constructing mechanical devices and simple machines, electrical and electronic circuits and microcontrollers. This course encourages students to develop their problem solving skills and they will begin to develop an ability to read and interpret circuit diagrams while effectively planning and designing their projects.

In this subject, students will further develop their knowledge and understanding of the Product Design Process. They will learn to prepare a Product Design Folio and construct a number of items using a range of textile materials and processes. Topics covered will include; the safe use of the sewing machine, accurate preparation of materials, simple garment construction, and working safely with a range of materials, tools and equipment. Projects will include; beginner garment construction, simple product upcycling and introduction to fabric art and decoration.
In this subject, students will further develop their knowledge and understanding of the Product Design Process using wood as the main material. They will learn to prepare a Product Design Folio and construct a number of items using a range of wood working processes. Topics covered will include; the production processes and an introduction to wood, accurate preparation of materials, simple construction of joints, and working safely with a range of materials, tools and equipment. Projects will include; construction of a computer desk tidy.

Do you love performing on stage? Have you never performed before, but would like to give it a go? In this course, students participate in activities every lesson to build their confidence as performers. They explore different ways to express themselves by experimenting and working with different characters and scripts. They also develop teamwork skills by planning and presenting group performances to the class in the styles of realism and melodrama. During this course there will be ongoing self-reflection and evaluation so students can monitor their own learning. Students will also view a live performance and analyse how the elements of drama (set, costumes, acting, lights etc.) were used.

Media allows students to explore some new opportunities to create in the technological age. They will become critical thinkers and learn to question what they are told by the Media. They will develop the skills to understand how to interpret the images, films, music and words that they encounter every day. Students will study how the media shapes the viewpoints of people in society, especially in their own backyard. Media is a great option for the student who loves investigating why we think the way we do or why the things we read, watch and hear make us react in particular ways. Those who might be aiming for a career in the movies, journalism, tech design or those who just love to create will build strong foundations through selecting this subject.

Students continue to investigate music through composition and performance, using instruments, voice and technology. Through listening, interpreting and performing they will further develop their own musicianship. Students will collaborate with their peers and compose, rehearse and perform music in group settings. Whilst the focus will be on ensemble performance, music theory and aural skills will be learned and developed.

In Year 8 Art students will build upon skills learnt in Year 7 Visual Art as well as developing skills in 3D art techniques. Subject matter may include landscapes, fantasy, nature and indigenous themed ceramics. Students will create a folio of 2D and 2D artworks using a variety of art media and techniques (water colour, oil and dry pastels, clay, printmaking and recycled materials). Students will also observe and respond to 2D and 3D artworks.