

MIDDLE SCHOOL @ CORNERSTONE



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Middle School Philosophy

The Middle School at Cornerstone College encompasses Year 7, 8 and 9. It provides flexible learning for student in their adolescent years and we believe provides the foundation for the development of the student in the spiritual, social, educational, cultural and physical aspects of their lives. A student moving through our Middle School is seen as a gift from God who can be a light to this world.

When a student graduates from Middle School they will be:

- Courageous, ethical global citizens
- Able to know their passions, strengths and challenges
- Critical thinkers
- Able to work with others in a caring, compassionate way
- A lifelong learner
- Know that they are loved by God.

Our Middle School will provide an environment that:

- Is supportive and caring to an individual's learning
- Is safe
- Provides the framework for success
- Celebrates learning by staff and students
- Is innovative
- Provides scaffolding for students to succeed in a rich curriculum
- Values student voice and reflection.

Our educational program consists of:

- Integrated subjects
- Inquiry based learning
- Literacy and numeracy
- Differentiation to encourage and inspire different learners.

Our curriculum (Year 7-9) is based on:

- Australian Curriculum
- SACSA Framework
- Lutheran schools Christian Studies Curriculum Framework for Christian Living.

Excerpts from the Australian Curriculum have been used in this document.

Inquiry Based Learning and Integrated Curriculum

Background

Inquiry based learning is based on the constructionist theory.

Constructionist theory

“Constructivism is a theory to explain how knowledge is constructed in the human being when information comes into contact with existing knowledge that had been developed by experiences. It has its roots in cognitive psychology and biology and an approach to education that lays emphasis on the ways knowledge is created in order to adapt to the world¹.”

Inquiry Based Learning

Inquiry based learning may come in different forms or names (such as problem based learning, discovery based learning). In essence, it is when students are presented with a scenario/problem that they then research issues to develop their knowledge and understanding. Teachers facilitate and guide their learning. Assessment is often in the form of projects or presentations.

Inquiry based learning can be based around themes that allow the student to see a real life application.

Why are we doing it at Cornerstone College?

- We believe that it will provide the framework for our students to develop into lifelong learners and provide the skills necessary to be good 21st century citizens.
- Many of our feeder primary schools are using this method to deliver their curriculum.

Some clips to ponder: <http://youtu.be/BlvKWEvKSi8> and <http://youtu.be/9gw3hk0ZpLg>

What does Integrated Curriculum mean?

Integrated curriculum is where we try and push students learning outside of the traditional KLA's. We look for links in knowledge across subjects so that it becomes a real learning experience. There is still the need for formal teaching of some skills so that students have the tools to reach individual excellence.

Thinking Curriculum

We believe at Cornerstone College that it is important for students to understand what kind of learner they are. Throughout the Middle School, students are exposed to thinking skills and frameworks so that they can work out how best they learn. At Year 7, students use the Mindsets framework to assist their learning and in Year 8 and 9, Habits of Mind.

Further information on these frameworks can be found at:

<http://qedfoundation.org/fixed-vs-growth-mindsets/>

<http://habitsofmind.org/>

1. Cakir, M. (2008). Constructivist Approaches to Learning in Science and Their Implications for Science Pedagogy: A Literature Review. International Journal of Environmental & Science Education, 3(4), 193-206.

Adaptive Education

Alternative Programs and Support for Year 7

Special Education is specially designed instruction to meet the unique learning needs of students who require individualised education programs. Special Education can be delivered in a variety of settings based on the student's needs. Special Education at Cornerstone College is called Adaptive Education and encompasses the full spectrum of needs from high learning needs students that are Commonwealth funded, students with specific learning needs, and gifted and talented students. The department is led by a full-time teacher with a significant load allocated to leading and supporting Adaptive Education, other teaching staff allocated time for student support, gifted and talented and SACE support, as well as four Lutheran Support Officers (LSOs), both full-time and part-time. Cornerstone has had a well-established and well-resourced Adaptive Education programme for many years.

Adaptive Education Centre

The Middle School Learning Centre, Paideia, includes a purpose-built Adaptive Education Centre located adjacent to the Year 7 learning area, so their needs have been intentionally considered when planning our future needs in the school. Students in the Senior School are also supported from this centre, as well as through our ongoing use of flexible options, particularly through SACE flexible learning, external transition programs and VET programs.

Transition

Cornerstone has a well-established Year 7 and 8 Transition Programme to support students transitioning to high school. This incorporates significant data collection, school visits, family meetings, pre-planning and staff training for students identified as requiring Adaptive Education support. The Middle School Wellbeing Leader (MSWL) and Middle School Learning Leader (MSLL) take responsibility for this programme.

Identification

The identification process has usually already begun once the student starts education in a high school setting. Handover of information from the primary school is essential in the transition process. The Transition Coordinator visits the primary school of identified students to observe them in their familiar setting to enable us to gain a better picture of their learning needs. Extra transition, above the norm for the year level cohort, is offered to students identified as those who would benefit from additional time to settle into high school routines and orientate themselves with a new school setting.

This could include:

- Extra school visits
- Further observations of the student in their primary school
- Family meetings
- Meetings with their current primary school teacher.

Students are identified by Adaptive Education team as needing extra support by reviewing student records, professional reports provided by parents, previous school reports including grades, NAPLAN results and other test scores. They may also recommend further professional testing such as psychological, speech pathology, hearing or vision assessments. The parent will be invited to a meeting, ideally consisting of teachers, and possibly a counsellor or member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss the student's needs.

Once students have started further identification is possible.

- Parents can request help for their child either verbally, in person, or by phone.
- Teachers can identify students needing help and request support from Adaptive Education staff.

Parent consent needs to be obtained for information to be gathered from outside agencies and external support to be sought for the student.

Testing

The MYAT test will be conducted for all Year 7 students as a useful tool to provide further information for recognising students with learning needs as well as those that might benefit from greater levels of challenge and extension.

Support

Support is offered in mainstream classes, by withdrawal and through the establishment of focus and life skill classes.

In-class support is offered to students as a non-intrusive method of support. An LSO works in the class room, alongside the teacher to provide support for students. They unobtrusively check for understanding, help with breaking tasks into smaller steps and assist the teacher with relevant curriculum modification where necessary.

Focus classes are run in Maths and English to support students struggling specifically in those areas. These are supported by LSO staff in the management of resources, working with small groups and curriculum modification.

Life skills classes will be run in our purpose-built Adaptive Education area. Cooking, vegetable garden, social skills and modified classes will be a focus.

Gifted and Talented Students

Gifted Education aims to extend those students who have been identified through the information gathering processes already described and are invited to participate in a program aptly named 'Stretch.' Students are given opportunities to extend themselves and their range of knowledge thorough different means and modes. A range of these options will be available to Year 7 students.

Students may be extended by:

- In-class differentiation by the class teacher with assistance from Adaptive Education staff
- 'Stretch' programme on Edmodo
- Invitation to participate in extra-curriculum programmes eg. Tournament of Minds
- Special programmes run by the Stretch Coordinator, with students withdrawn from class for certain meetings
- Special personalised projects to meet an individual's needs.
- Accessing various external programmes as they arise eg. university invitations to special programmes, gifted and talented programmes, subject specific clubs etc.
- Acceleration – eg. participation in Extension Maths classes which accelerate students one year in their study
- Linking with a mentor in specific area of interest

Pastoral Care – Leadership Opportunities

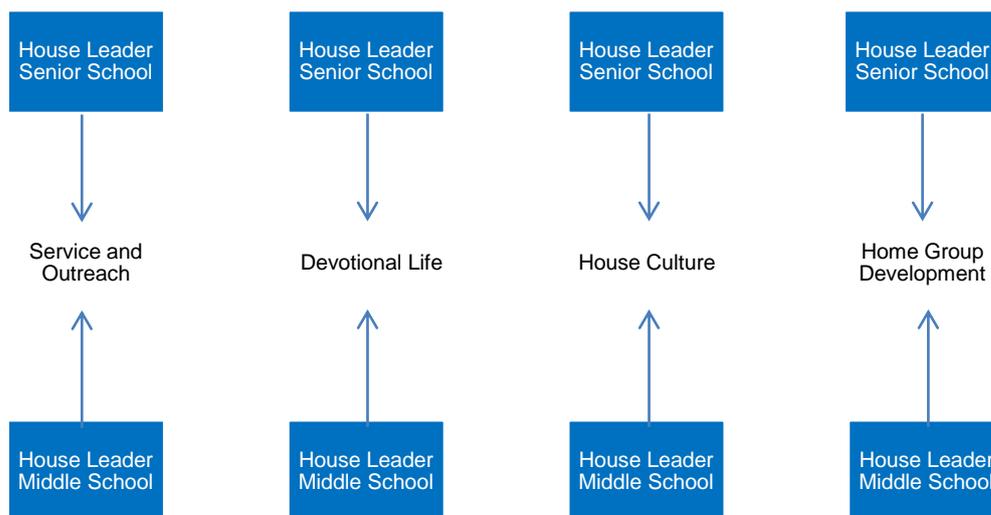
College Leaders

Six College Leaders form a team that is made up from at least one student from each of the four houses. Their role includes representing the College and creating opportunities to link the Middle and Senior Schools.



House Leaders

Each House, as per the diagram below, will have four Middle School and four Senior School House Leaders per house (16 for Middle School, 16 for Senior School). Their role includes upholding and enhancing House culture and values, and encouraging students to participate in House activities and events. They will each have an additional focus area – Service and Outreach, Devotional Life, House Culture or Home Group Development.



Each of the roles, College Leaders and House Leaders, commence at the beginning of Term 4 with the selection process beginning early in Term 3.

Student Representative Council (SRC)

The SRC is a forum that provides opportunities for students to formally discuss matters associated with College life and facilitate the organisation of particular student activities within the College.

The representatives attend regular meetings and act as the liaison between the Staff Leaders and the general student body. Each House will aim to have one SRC representative per year level. As far as possible a balance of genders will be sought. The SRC has representation on the College Canteen and Uniform Committees.

Care and Connection at Cornerstone

- Wellbeing Director
- Middle School Wellbeing Leader
- House Leaders
- Home Group teachers
- Pastor and Chaplain
- Counsellors
- Student Care Team – weekly meetings to ensure academic and emotional welfare.

Restorative Practices - Foundation

- We don't live in a perfect world
- Everyone is equal in the eyes of God
- When relationships are broken our aim is to restore them
- Based on God's love for us.

Restorative Practices

Involves 'mediation meetings' which aim to resolve a problem – not to blame

- Telling what has happened
- Exploring who has been affected
- Repairing and putting things right
- Moving forward in a way that stops it happening again.

Camps/Experiences

Cornerstone is focused on achieving the best outcomes possible for every student, at a time when young people are experiencing significant change in their lives – emotionally, physically, socially, spiritually and intellectually. We believe that central for students to succeed in the world beyond school, they need self-confidence, a positive approach to learning, and a willingness to attempt new tasks. The camp's program have been developed with these aims in mind. Through these various activities, the students' learning can be enhanced in an environment other than the classroom.

Year 7

3 day camp (Mylor)

Students complete various activities over the three days and are grouped in small house groups.

The aims of the camp are:

- Have fun!
- Have the opportunity to develop new, and strengthen existing, friendships.
- Discover more about yourself and your relationship with others.
- Gain new insights into your own abilities and potential.
- Develop teamwork skills, cooperation and tolerance for others within a positive environment.

Year 8

5 day activities week

Students rotate through various activities over the week culminating in presentation day on Friday.

Activities are: overnight stay, high ropes, indigenous studies, Amazing Race, service learning, cyber education and healthy living.

The themes of the week are: looking after self, looking after others, looking after our community.

Year 9

5 day camp

Students complete various activities over the week which is a culmination of the Journey Program.

Activities include – solo night, sailing, water skiing, canoeing and caving.

Aims- the camp is designed to help students develop resilience and is the beginning of the final stage of the Journey Program.

Healthy Habits

Students who set the foundation for healthy habits early in their schooling generally perform better than students who use the “just in time” model. Sometimes it may be hard to break old habits, but by chipping away at them and reinforcing good practices students will gain the best chance of success.

Here are 5 simple steps to help establish good healthy habits:

1. Have at least eight hours of sleep per night

A great article on teens and sleep can be found at

<http://www.sleepfoundation.org/article/sleep-topics/teens-and-sleep>

In short, the better you sleep, the better you function.

2. Turn off the technology

Give yourself a break from using technology. Sleep patterns of teenagers are often significantly affected by technology. Your brain needs time to rest, but by always being “switched on” it doesn’t have the chance.

A book recommended for all parents is “Real Wired Child: What Parents Need To Know About Kids Online” - Author: Michael Carr-Gregg

3. Eat good meals – breakfast is vital!

A glass of milk and a banana (or another piece of fruit) is enough to kick start your body and get it ready for the day. Plenty of water and nutritious meals allow for the body to replenish and repair during the day.

4. Have a break

Everyone needs a hobby. Playing an instrument or being part of team are just a couple of ways you can recharge your batteries and give yourself a break from your study.

5. No set homework does not mean no work

Spend some time going over concepts that you have been working on at school. Chip away at a major assignment, read a book. Be prepared for tests, ask your teachers for help in setting up your routines.

Smart goals are a great way to start preparing for your learning.

Specific

Measurable

Achievable

Relevant

Timely

Curriculum Year 7 - 12

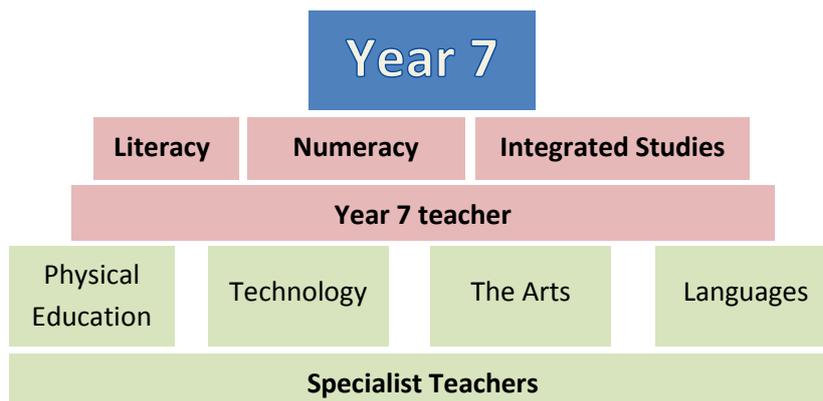
	Christian Living (CL)	English	Maths	Science	Humanities and Social Sciences	Business, Enterprise & Technology	The Arts	Health & Physical Education	Languages	Cross-disciplinary Studies
Yr 7	Christian Living	English	Maths	Science	History Geography	Material Products – Food, Systems, Textiles	Arts – Art, Drama, Music, Media Studies	PE	Chinese (sem) German (sem)	
Yr 8	Christian Living	English	Maths – 3 levels	Science	History Geography	Material Products – Food, Systems, Textiles	Arts – Art, Drama, Music	PE	Chinese or German Choose language	
Year 9	Christian Living (The Journey – combined with PE)	English	Maths – 3 levels	Science	History Geography	Electives Design & Technology Home Economics	Electives Art Music Drama	PE (The Journey – combined with CL)	Min sem of Chinese or German	
Year 10	Christian Living	English	Maths – 3 levels	Science – Sem 1 Biology, Chemistry and Physics units Sem 2 – elective programme – do 3 of 7 Science options	History – compulsory (ACARA) Electives Asian Studies Geography – Extreme Geography – Environmental	Electives Mat Prod – Metal Mat Prod - Textiles Mat Prod – Wood Comm Prod – CAD Food & Health Food Skills Info Technology Systems & Control Products	Electives Dance Drama Music Vis Art – D&P Vis Art-Design Vis Art- Sculpture	PE Elective Outdoor Ed	Electives Chinese German	PLP (SACE)
Year 11	Christian Living Vetamorphus	English- theme based	Maths Applications Maths for Industry Maths Studies Specialist Maths	Biology - Environmental Biology – Human Biology – Nutritional Chemistry Physics Psychology	History Geography Philosophy Tourism	Business & Ent Child Studies Comm Prod – CAD Food & Hospitality Info Technology Mat Prod - Food Mat Prod – Metal Mat Prod - Textiles Mat Prod – Wood Systems & Control Products	Drama Music Vis Art – D&P Vis Art-Design Vis Art- Sculpture	PE Outdoor Ed – bushwalking Outdoor Ed – mountainn biking Compulsory (2 lessons/week) Health & Fitness	Chinese German	Community Studies Flexible Options via Open Access and Marden
Year 12	Christian Living	English Studies English Communications	Maths Applications Maths Methods Maths Studies Specialist Maths	Biology Chemistry Nutrition Physics Psychology	Geography Modern History Tourism	Business & Ent Child Studies Food & Hospitality Info Technology Material Products – Metal, Textile, Wood Workplace Practices	Drama Music Visual Art – Art Visual Art – Design	PE Outdoor Ed	Chinese German	Community Studies Research Project (SACE) Flexible Options via Open Access and Marden

Reporting Schedule

Written reports and family interviews

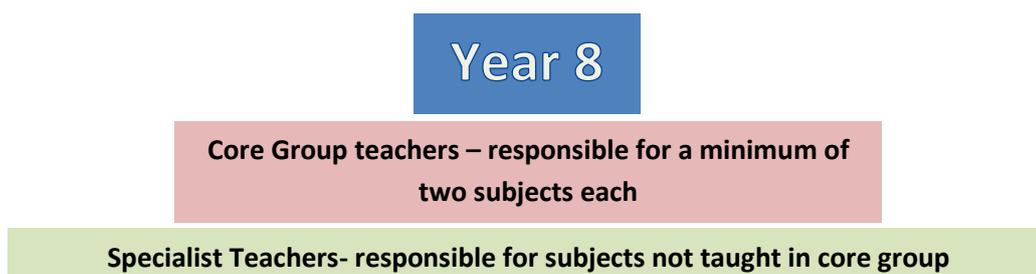
	Subject Reports	Pastoral Reports
Term 1	Year 7 Written progress comment and grade for each elective subject and summary grade for core subjects.	Years 7 - 9 Reports distributed by Home Group teacher at parent/teacher interview. Opportunity to discuss academic progress and pastoral matters.
	Years 8 and 9 Written progress comment for each subject and progress grade.	
Term 2 – Week 1	Subject teacher-parent interviews to discuss subject progress.	Year 7 Subject teacher-parent interviews.
End Semester 1	Summative grade and optional short comment for each subject. Reports posted.	Written home group teacher comments on pastoral matters and community involvement in reports.
Term 3	Written progress comment for each subject and progress grade. Reports posted.	
Term 4 – Week 1	Subject teacher-parent interviews to discuss progress.	
End Semester 2	Summative grade and optional short comment for each subject. Reports posted.	Written home group teacher comments on pastoral matters and community involvement in reports.
	Year 7 Showcase.	

Middle School Structure

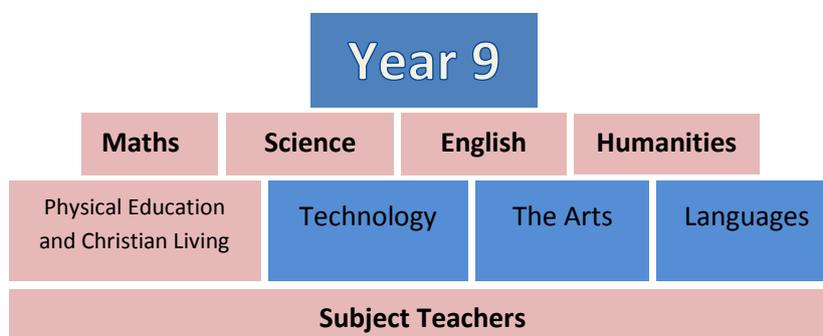


The structure of Year 7 allows for students to develop skills and knowledge in a holistic manner. A minimum of 20 lessons in the timetable (out of 30 lessons per week) will be together as a cohort, which allows for integration across classes. They will have their Year 7 classroom teacher for literacy, numeracy and Integrated Studies. Students will move out of the Middle School centre (Paideia) for studies in The Arts, Technology and PE.

Lessons will be either 50 minutes (Lessons 1-4) or 45 minutes (Lessons 5 and 6) in duration.

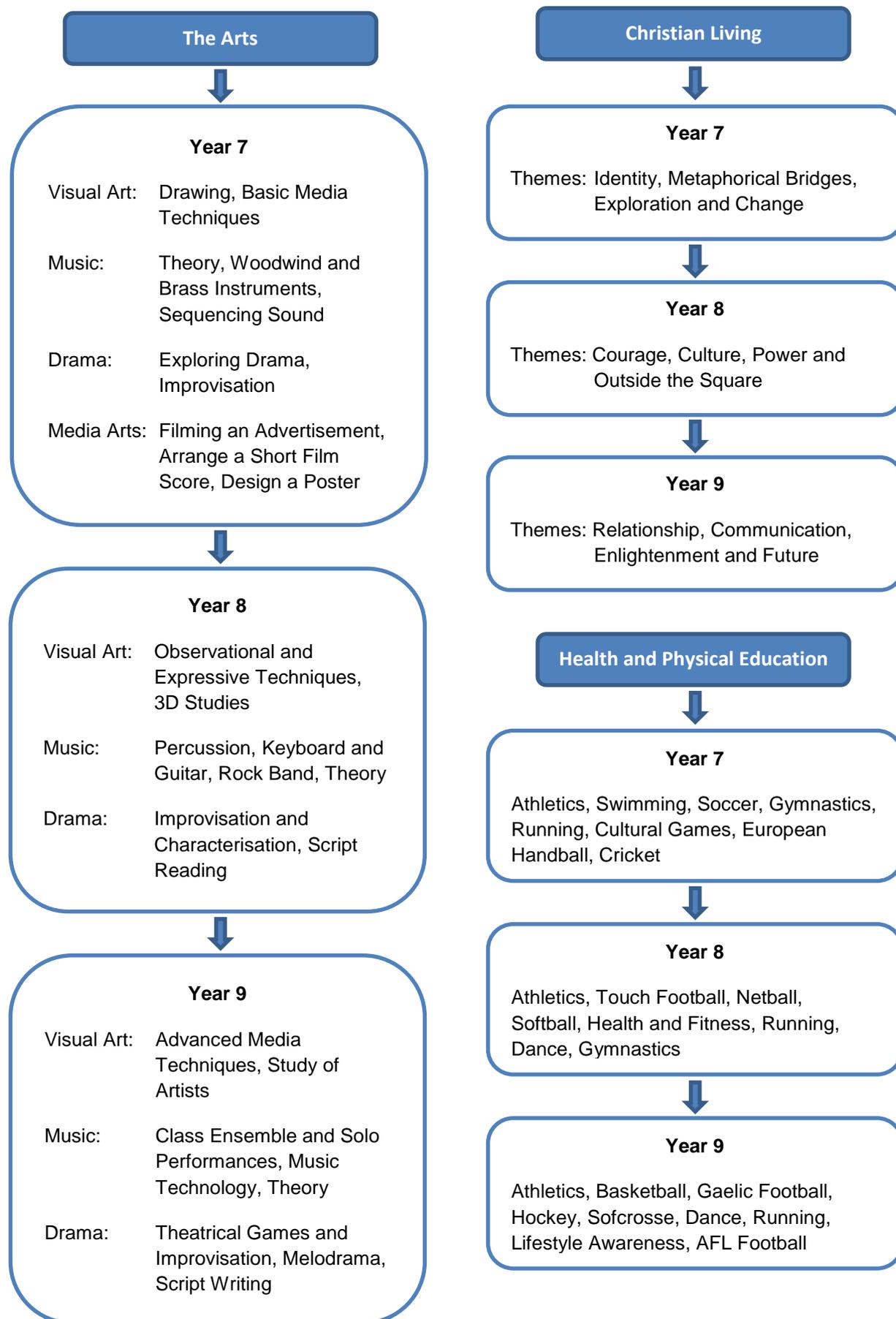


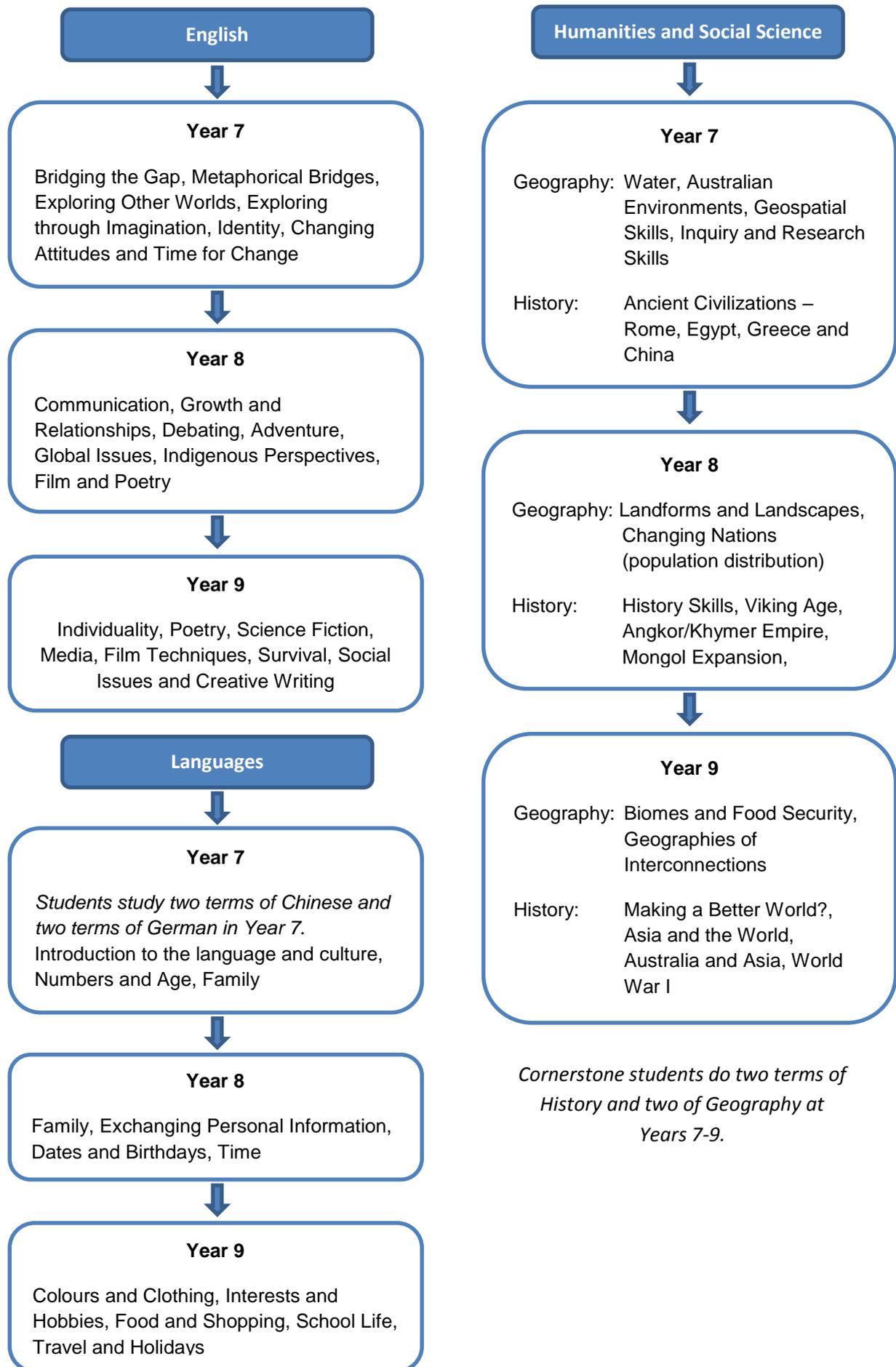
In Year 8, students will have a minimum of two Core Group teachers who will teach a minimum of two subjects each. Students will have specialist teachers for the subjects not taught with their core group. Depending on timetabling, students will have most of their core lessons in Paideia and move from this facility to specialist areas.

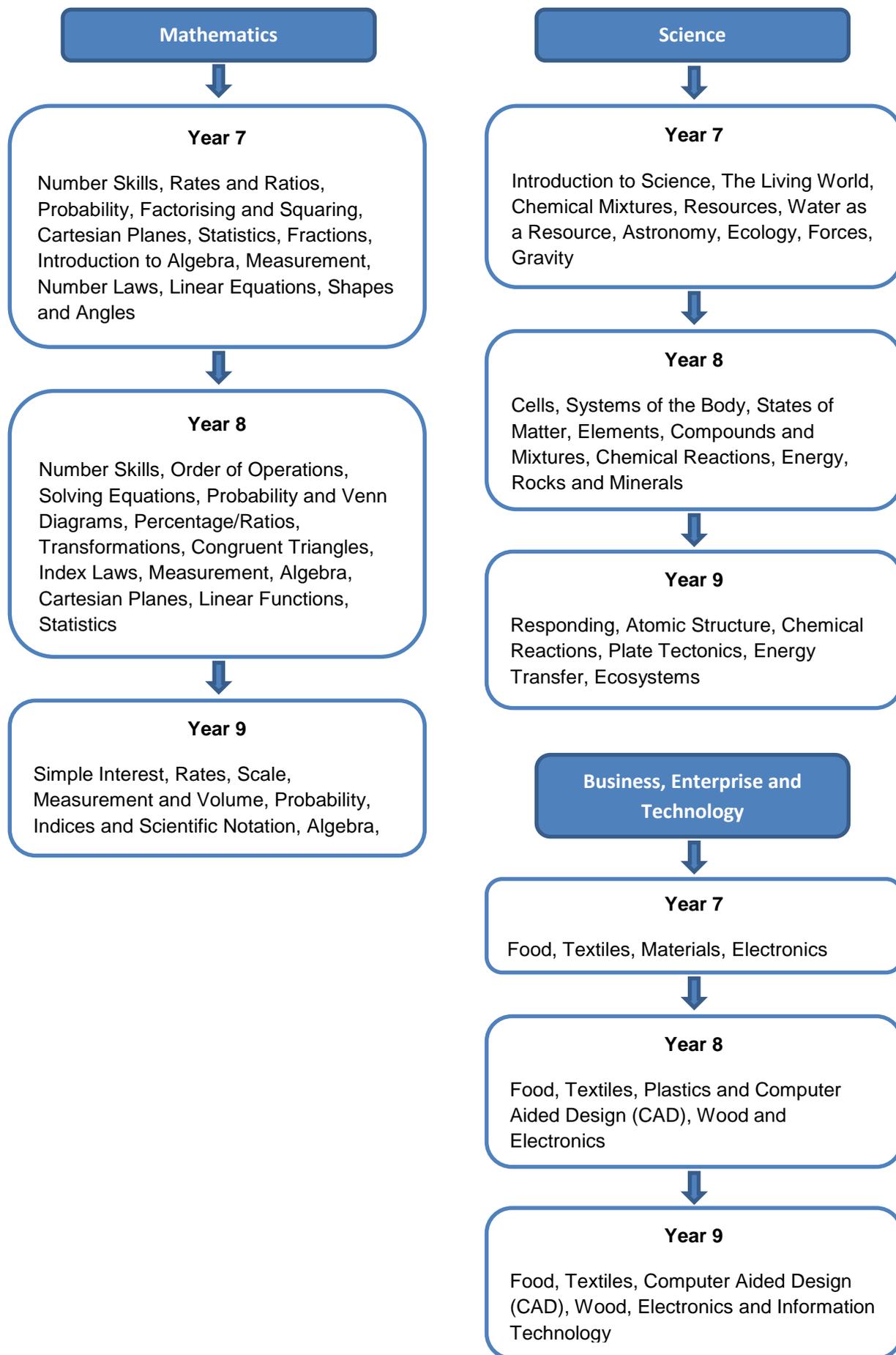


In Year 9, each student will study eight core subjects which will vary from one semester to a full year in length. Students will also study five, single-semester, elective subjects. The core subjects of Physical Education and Christian Living will be single sex classes.

Subject Information







Year 9 Selection Information

At Year 9, the curriculum at Cornerstone has been designed to give students the opportunity to study each of the nine Learning Areas for at least one semester. This is structured by students having a group of compulsory (or CORE) subjects and a group of choice (or ELECTIVE) subjects.

All students will undertake the CORE subjects of:

English (full year)	Physical Education (full year)	Information Technology (one semester)
Christian Living (full year)	History (one semester)	
Mathematics (full year)	Geography (one semester)	
Science (full year)		

Students must then choose any **FIVE** of the following single semester **ELECTIVE** subjects:

Art	German A	Music A
Chinese A	German B	Music B
Chinese B	Home Economics	
Drama	Design and Technology	

NOTES

1. **Students** should give preference to subjects they are likely to continue with in Year 10.
2. **All students** must choose one semester of a language - either German A or Chinese A.
3. **All students** must choose at least one Arts option – a minimum of one from Art, Music A or Drama.
4. **Music:**
 - Students wanting to continue to Year 10 Music must choose Music A and Music B.
 - Students may choose only one semester of Music out of interest (Music A), but remember this will not be sufficient background to continue to Year 10.
 - **Students must be having private music tuition or private voice lessons to do ANY Music in Year 9 (either one or two semesters), as participation in class ensembles is an essential part of class work.**
5. **Languages:**
 - Students must choose German A and B if they want the option of studying Year 10 German.
 - Students must choose Chinese A and B if they want the option of studying Year 10 Chinese.
6. **Study Support:**

Some students are offered Study Support by the Adaptive Education Team. These students/families will be approached directly regarding this. If this occurs please indicate Study Support on your form in place of the Compulsory Language (Preference 1). This option is only available to students approached by the Adaptive Education department.
7. **If a Language or Music is chosen for the whole year it cannot be changed once selections are made.**

Further Information

The Arts

Drama, Media Arts, Music, Visual Art

Ms Laetitia de Braconier Harders

ldebraconierharders@cornerstone.sa.edu.au

Business, Enterprise and Technology

CAD, Electronics, Food Studies, Home Economics,
Information Technology, Material Products, Plastics, Textiles, Wood

Mr Nick Rolfs

nrolfs@cornerstone.sa.edu.au

Christian Living

Mrs Simona McMaster

smcmaster@cornerstone.sa.edu.au

English

Mr Ben Brazzalotto

bbrazzalotto@cornerstone.sa.edu.au

Health and Physical Education

Health, Physical Education, Outdoor Education

Mr Warwick Ratcliffe

wratcliffe@cornerstone.sa.edu.au

Humanities and Social Sciences

Geography, History

Mr Ian Mars

imars@cornerstone.sa.edu.au

Languages

Chinese, German

Ms Wendy Lampard

wlampard@cornerstone.sa.edu.au

Mathematics

Mr Eric McDonald

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Science

Mr Andrew Weiss

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