



6th October 2026



WELCOME TO YEAR 9

Year Leader: Miss Castelain

Deputy Year Leader: Mrs Shepherd



School vision

...to develop knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world.



Whole school priorities

A caring, open-minded and principled community

High quality teaching

A rich curriculum

Life-transforming outcomes & destinations

Very high levels of student attendance



Attendance

24.21% of secondary school students missed 10% or more of school, compared to 13.90% in primary schools

Missing just **10 days of school in Year 11 halves the likelihood** of a student achieving a Grade 5 in both English and Maths compared to peers with **95%+ attendance**

90% attendance across 5 years of secondary school = 1/2 an academic year of missed learning

The overall absence rate in state-funded secondary schools reached **8.57%** in 2025/2026

In 2022/2023, 60% of pupils who missed a day in week 1 of the academic year went on to be PA (for the year) – **absence sticks**

WELCOME TO YEAR 9



**Attendance
in year 9**

Current attendance	25/26 attendance
95.3%	94.7%
7-10 attendance 25/26 94.2%	
7-11 attendance <u>T1-5</u> 25/26 94% with 13.8% PA	

19 days of absence for the full academic year (September to end of summer term in July) will make your child a PA student.



Supporting your child's attendance

Build a consistent routine

- Treat school days as being non-negotiable (avoid term-time holidays)
- Encourage your child to get organised the night before (uniform, bag packed)
- **Sleep**, exercise and **time away from screens**; 'Presenteeism'

Use support systems early (teachers, mentor, year leader and safeguarding staff)

- If your child is finding attendance difficult, don't wait - **let the school know**

Keep motivation high

- Celebrate good attendance and progress



Priorities in year 9

1. Routines

- Classroom routines (Ready to learn, ready to leave)
- Mentoring routines

2. Setting strong behaviour habits

- On time to school/lessons
- Effort - aspiring to work hard in all lessons

3. Options



Year 9 Options

The Non-Examined Curriculum

All students will continue their timetabled lessons in PE and PSHE.

The Examined Curriculum

All students will study the following combination of courses for GCSE:

1. English Literature and Language (two GCSEs)
2. Mathematics
3. Science Two GCSEs: GCSE Combined Science (Trilogy)
or Three GCSEs: GCSE Biology, GCSE Chemistry, GCSE Physics (Triple)
4. A modern language All students study at least one modern language (French, Spanish or German) choosing from those studied in KS3
5. Three additional subjects.

We strongly advise all students to select History and/or Geography as one of their options in order to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum, and to provide excellent preparation for sixth form and university study.



Year 9

Options

Option Subject List:

A second language (French,
Spanish or German)

Art and Design: Fine Art

Art and Design: Three dimensional
design

Business

Computing

Drama

Food Preparation and Nutrition

Geography

History

Music

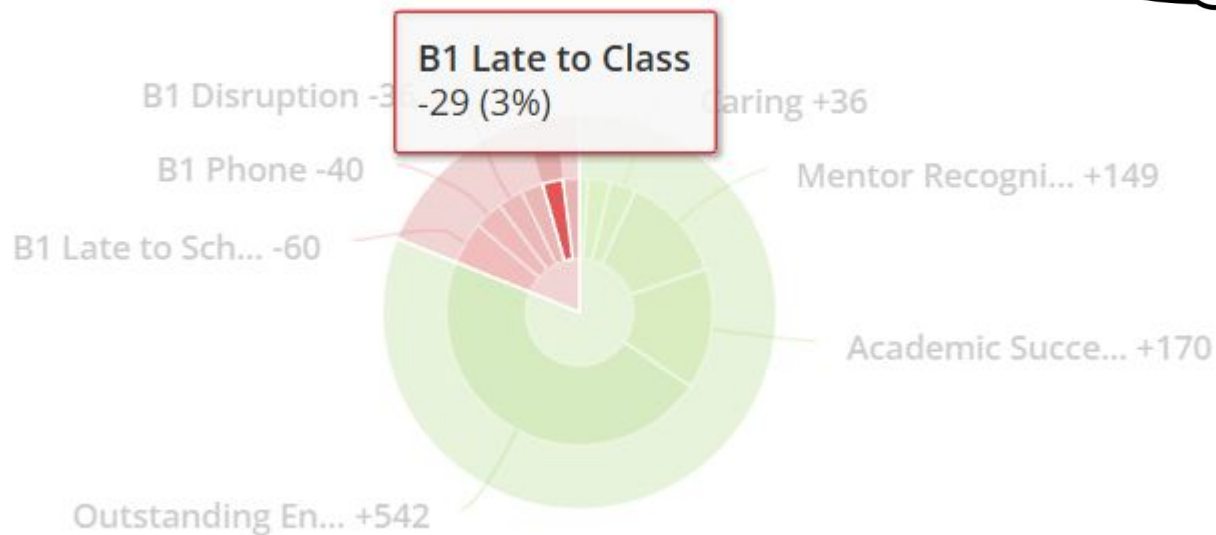
PE and Sport

Religious Studies and Philosophy

Statistics



Priorities in year 9





Curriculum in year 9

Languages:

Refining target language communication across real-world themes while mastering compound tenses, modal structures, and complex sentence mechanics to establish solid GCSE fluency.

Maths:

Consolidating core algebraic and geometric principles, including linear equations, simultaneous systems, quadratic expressions, probability, trigonometry, and multi-step problem solving.

English:

Developing **critical literary analysis and creative writing** through thematic studies of **power, conflict, and societal change** in modern prose, poetry anthologies, persuasive non-fiction, and Shakespearean tragedy.



Curriculum in year 9

Humanities: **Deepening analytical and evaluative skills across time and space** - exploring 20th-century global conflicts in History, evaluating demographic shifts, climate change, and urbanisation in Geography, and examining human rights and global justice in RE.

Sciences: **Expanding empirical inquiry and fundamental scientific theory** across three core disciplines: studying forces, energy transfer, and wave properties in Physics; atomic bonding, chemical reactions, and the periodic table in Chemistry; and cellular biology, genetics, and health and disease in Biology.

Practical Subjects: **Applying creative expression and technical execution in advanced contexts.** Refining competitive tactics, physical fitness, and leadership in PE; examining conceptual art and mixed-media design in Art; exploring music technology and composition in Music; and devising immersive, issue-based performances and scripted theatre in Drama.



Trips and events in year 9

Year Group Trip - in the process of being planned.

Update will come before the end of this term -

Proposal: **Ice Skating at Gillingham**

Last year...

- 75% of students from year 7-12 attended a school trip.
- 68.1% whole school attended extra curricular activities in school

Please encourage your young people to consider their extra-curricular and super curricular offer.

- **Year 9 Options Information Evening (Thur 14/1)**
- **Year 9 parents' evening (Tue 2/3)**

WELCOME TO YEAR 9



PSHE Curriculum

Term 1 Healthy Lifestyles	Term 2 Careers and Living in the Wider World	Term 3 Staying Safe - Peer Influence
Term 4 Intimate Relationships	Term 5 Health - Drug Education and the Law	Term 6 Relationships and Families
External Speakers: With you (drug education), Kent Road Safety, Thanet Roadshow (peer influence and county lines)		



**Student
ambassadors**

Students now in year 10



Parent App

DOWNLOAD OUR MOBILE APP



Messages: our primary tool for direct updates.



Newsfeed: stories, achievements and updates



Student timetables: view your child's daily schedule



Absence Reporting: easily report student absences



Parent App

The Dane Court Grammar School app can easily be found on the app store and is ready to download.

How We Are Using the App

- **Messages (Push Notifications):** This is our primary tool for direct updates. Please ensure notifications are enabled on your phone so you receive immediate alerts when a message is sent.
- **Absence Reporting:** You can now report student absences directly through the app. As a reminder, we require daily notifications for any ongoing absence. If you are picking your child up early for an appointment, please include the collection time and the reason in your message.
- **Student Timetables:** Easily view your child's daily schedule.
- **Newsfeed:** Check this tab regularly for celebratory stories, student achievements, and general school news. *(Note: Newsfeed updates do not trigger push notifications, so be sure to browse it periodically!)*

We look forward to rolling out even more features on the app throughout the coming year.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS



The deadline for applying for Free School Meals has been extended to **2nd November**. All children from households in receipt of Universal Credit are entitled to receive free school meals.

If your household receives Universal Credit, you could save up to £495 per year per child on school lunches. For families with multiple children, these savings can make a substantial difference to household budgets.

Beyond the financial benefits, this programme ensures children receive nutritious meals during school hours, which supports their learning and concentration in the classroom, physical health and development and overall wellbeing.

www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals





Dane Court website

Mental Health and Wellbeing Page

<https://www.danecourt.kent.sch.uk/wellbeing>



Family Support Page

<https://www.danecourt.kent.sch.uk/familysupport>





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Mentors:

9B - Mrs Howard-Lubendo & Ms. Myers (Fr. B)

9D - Mrs Valverde & Mr Ballard (Wednesdays)

9H - Mr Hatcher

9N - Mr Miller

9S - Ms. Taylor & Ms. Baker (Wednesdays)

9T - Ms. Berritt & Ms. Mobin (Mon and Tues)

WELCOME TO YEAR 9



Mentoring Curriculum

w/b	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Week
31/08				Mentor Booklets - Reflections	YL Welcome to Year 9 Assembly - B to do the tables	A
07/09	Soft Mentoring Wellbeing Videos	Cultural Capital Reading + Admin	Mentor Curriculum - Online Safeguarding - Lesson 1	Welcome Back Assembly in the Theatre	Extended Mentoring	B
14/09	Soft Mentoring In the News/BBC Ideas	Extended Mentoring	Mentor Curriculum - Online Safeguarding - Lesson 2	Mentor Booklets - Week 1	Assembly - Routines (MG) - in The Theatre	A
21/09	Soft Mentoring Wellbeing Videos	Cultural Capital Reading + Admin	Mentor Booklets - Week 2	Extended Mentoring	Assembly - Anti-Bullying and rehearse routines - D to do the tables	B
28/09	Soft Mentoring In the News/BBC Ideas	Extended Mentoring	Mentor Curriculum - Online Safeguarding - Lesson 3	Mentor Booklets - Week 3	Assembly - Safeguarding & Behaviour LWWW/AND - H to do the tables	A
05/10	Soft Mentoring Wellbeing Videos	Cultural Capital Reading + Admin	Mentor Booklets - Week 4	Extended Mentoring	Assembly - Marginal gains (Dave Brailsford - 1%) - N to do the tables	B
12/10	Soft Mentoring In the News/BBC Ideas	Extended Mentoring	Mentor Curriculum - Online Safeguarding - Lesson 4	Mentor Booklets - Week 5	Assembly - Elevating Effort (NU) - S to do the tables	A
19/10	Soft Mentoring Wellbeing Videos	Cultural Capital Reading + Admin	Mentor Booklets - Week 6	Extended Mentoring	Assembly - Attendance and rehearse routines - T to do the tables	B



Ask the mentor

What does it mean to be a student in this form?

What we do during mentor times?

What do we need to improve on as a mentor group?

What opportunities are there for students in this form to get involved in the wider school community?

How do we review effort with your child after reporting data points?



Support

Who can students/families turn to for support:

- Mentor or Year Leader
- The PSO team
- Mrs Dillon or one of the Safeguarding team
- The SEN team
- KOOTH/ Togetherall (Use to be Big White Wall) (Free, safe and anonymous online support for young people Kooth is available for 10-25 yr olds & Togetherall is available for age 16+ www.kooth.com www.togetherall.com)
- Young Minds - www.youngminds.org.uk

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Contact the mentor

9B: Mrs Howard-Lubendo & Ms Myers
choward-lubendo@danecourt.kent.sch.uk
myers@danecourt.kent.sch.uk

9D: Ms Valverde & Mr Ballard
valverde-bautista@danecourt.kent.sch.uk
ballard@danecourt.kent.sch.uk

9H: Mr Hatcher jhatcher@danecourt.kent.sch.uk

9N: Mr Miller tmiller@danecourt.kent.sch.uk

9S: Ms Taylor & Mrs Baker baker@danecourt.kent.sch.uk
ctaylor@danecourt.kent.sch.uk

9T: Ms Berritt & Ms Mobin
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amobin@danecourt.kent.sch.uk