



Year 9 Specialist subjects 2026

To help students choose 'Specialist subjects' for 2026, this booklet contains:

- a brief description of each Year 9 subject
- links to video clips of teachers presenting information on each course.

Also, families are invited to an information evening at MHJC on Wednesday 30th July from 5:30pm.
(At this evening, please go straight to whanau displays, not the Theatre, which is for Year 6 families)

Instructions

Use the **Specialist subjects table** below to ensure that:

- your 1st and 2nd choices must come from different columns.
- your 3rd choice can come from any column.

A link to the **Specialist subject selection Form** will be emailed to students on Thursday 31st July. This:

- is for you to **enter 3 Specialist subjects**, from which you'll be allocated 2 to study.
- must be **submitted by Friday 15th August** (Term 3 Week 5)

Subject charges

Some subjects have charges, which are for either a 'take home' component, or outside provider costs.

By choosing a Specialist subject, parents agree to pay the charges listed before the course starts.

Specialist subjects table

Social Sciences	Arts	Technology	Languages
Social Enterprise	Music (\$25)	Design & Visual Communication	Te Āo Māori
Media Studies (\$25)	Visual Art (\$70)	Food Technology* (\$100)	Spanish
Outdoor Education (\$300)	Drama & Dance	Hard materials (\$80)	
Hospitality & Catering* (a business focus) (\$100)	Drama	Digital Technology (\$80)	
		Fashion & Design (\$80)	

*NB - you cannot choose both Hospitality & Catering AND Food Technology.

Year 9 Social Enterprise

A social enterprise is an organisation whose main purpose or goal is improving the lives of community members by solving a social problem or issue. Social enterprises generate income from trading goods or services, but use their 'profits' to support their social purpose - '*doing charity by doing trade*'?

The course teaches business concepts, such as Personal Finance and Marketing, in a practical way - you'll 'learn by doing', through project work and market day. The projects encourage you to interact with experts outside school, and to develop teamwork, communication and organisation skills. You'll investigate real social enterprises and entrepreneurs.

[Video link](#)

No subject charge

Year 9 Media Studies

In Media Studies, you'll explore media concepts critically and apply them in the production process through practical activities. You'll learn the essential skills and knowledge needed to progress to senior Media Studies, and beyond. The ability to communicate confidently is developed, as you work in groups to create media products, such as short films.

You'll need to solve problems, adapt, and be open to new ideas. You'll experience 'hands-on' use of technology, such as cameras and digital editing software. You'll critically interpret a wide range of media by studying 'visual texts'. Your experiences in the group project will enhance your creative skills, ability to work in a team, and perseverance to produce a finished product that meets the requirements of a brief.

[Video link](#)

\$25 subject charge

Year 9 Outdoor Education

Are you adventurous and eager to experience camping and tramping in both coastal and forest environments? Do you care about nature and enjoy giving back to your community? If so, this course could be a great fit for you! It offers opportunities to plan and undertake both community service and outdoor adventures—providing a space for your compassion, curiosity, and courage to grow.

This course includes a balance of in-class and hands-on outdoor learning experiences. You will develop valuable skills such as leadership, teamwork, risk management, and self-confidence. Students will require basic, appropriate outdoor clothing; a detailed gear list will be provided to families.

Please note that this subject has a **higher course fee** due to costs associated with equipment hire, instructors, and venue access. **Full payment is required prior to the course beginning** to confirm your place. Due to logistics and staffing, only one Year 9 Outdoor Education class will be offered.

[Video link](#)

\$300 subject charge

Year 9 Hospitality & Catering

This course is a Technology and Business Studies based course. Technology is a University approved course and continues in secondary schools to Year 13 NCEA and Scholarship. In Year 9, you'll develop and test food and beverage products that meet a client's design brief for a specific event or function. This will develop your ability to think creatively and to work both independently, and as a team member.

You'll learn about Food Safety in the Service and Hospitality Industry, the history of different food businesses and how they're organised, and the types of jobs available. Your understanding will be demonstrated by working in a team to prepare and serve food for real events during the year. You'll learn the skills and knowledge needed in Year 10 and beyond. There are many Technology-related careers and tertiary courses for which Technology is an entry requirement.

Students **cannot choose both** Hospitality and Food Technology.
To secure your place in the class, full payment is required before the course starts.

[Video link](#)

\$100 subject charge

Line 2

Year 9 Music

In Music, you'll develop your instrument and performance skills, theory knowledge and use of music technology. From the start, you'll learn and play an instrument through the itinerant programme, which provides 30 minute lessons each week. In class, you'll learn the 'building blocks', or main theory components, of music; hearing, identifying, singing and playing different scales, chords and rhythms. During the year, you'll prepare and perform a piece of music to an audience. You'll record, compose and arrange music using technology, which is essential for 21st century musicians.

Students do not need to know how to play an instrument to take Year 9 Music. However, a willingness to try new things and step outside their comfort zone, and an enthusiasm for music, are essential.

[Video link](#)

\$25 subject charge

Year 9 Visual Arts

Students will have opportunities to develop ideas, skills and techniques in two or three of the following disciplines: drawing and painting, printmaking, design and time-based Art. Students will work through a series of practical projects and represent a variety of contexts.

Year 9 Visual Arts is for students who wish to:

- Experiment with drawing, painting and printmaking
- Develop creativity and individual self expression in Visual Art processes
- Acquire skills, knowledge and understanding of art through authentic pathways
- Develop a wide appreciation of the visual world and recognise their place in it

"While Art continues to be a desirable choice for students wishing to pursue 'traditional' creative careers, such as Architecture, Interior Design or Painting / Fine Art related professions, the internet has seen an explosion of exciting, new roles emerge." <http://www.studentartguide.com/articles/reasons-to-study-art>

Full payment is required **before the course starts** to secure your place on the course.

[Video link](#)

\$70 subject charge

Year 9 Drama & Dance

This course develops basic skills in both drama and dance, and the balance of time spent on each area will reflect the interests and needs of the group. Although there are no pre-requisites, enthusiasm and a willingness to 'have a go' are important. This is a great choice for students with a passion for performing arts, who want to increase their confidence, public speaking, group work and performance skills.

In Drama, you'll develop performance skills, such as techniques, elements and conventions, which help you to perform in a range of situations. You'll learn to work with different people in a range of situations, building your communication skills and confidence when performing in public.

In dance, you'll learn a variety of techniques and choreographic skills in a number of genres and styles. You'll work both independently and in groups to compose work to be performed in front of an audience.

[Video link](#)

No subject charge

Year 9 Drama

In Year 9 Drama you'll learn basic performance skills such as Drama Techniques, Drama Elements and Drama Conventions. These skills will help you perform in a range of situations, including two formal performance opportunities. An interest in performance techniques and creating original work for an audience is a benefit but not essential. Enthusiasm and a willingness to try everything are essential.

There will also be an opportunity to create props and costumes for Drama. You will learn to work with a wide range of people in various situations. You will develop communication abilities and confidence when performing in public.

The skills learned in Drama lead to a number of pathways. Being able to speak with confidence in a public situation is invaluable in other subjects that involve discussion and presentation. Being able to work cooperatively and creatively in a group helps problem solving skills that can be applied to many areas.

[Video link](#)

No subject charge

Line 3

Year 9 Design and Visual Communication (formerly Graphics)

Design & Visual Communication (DVC) is an international language, which enables students to demonstrate their ideas. DVC is taught through Year 13 and on to Technical Institutes and Universities in Architecture, Graphics Design, Engineering, Interior Design, Advertising, Computer Graphics, Landscape Design, etc.

The Year 9 course lays the foundation for Year 10 DVC, and focuses on meeting design briefs from: Architectural Design; Technological Design; and Media Design. It develops students' ability to find solutions to real-life design problems by applying the design process and communicating their ideas. You'll use a range of 'Graphics Modes', such as:

- Free-hand sketching in 2D & 3D
- Technical drawing (instrumental drawing 2D & 3D)
- Rendering and Modelling
- Design Software

[Video link](#)

No subject charge

Year 9 Food Technology

Technology is a University approved course and continues through to Year 13 NCEA. In this Year 9 course, you'll use technological practice to design, develop and test food products that meet a design brief. You'll think creatively, both independently and in groups, to undertake research and development using a variety of sources. You'll evidence your learning in written and practical form.

Skills learned in Year 9 Food Technology prepare you for Year 10 Food Technology. They are also useful across other subject areas.

*Students **cannot choose both** Food Technology and Hospitality.*

*Full payment is required **before the course starts** to secure your place on the course.*

[Video link](#)

\$100 subject charge

Year 9 Hard Materials Technology

This course is suitable for both female and male students. You'll develop technological products using modern processes, machine tools and computer aided design (CAD) programs. You'll investigate existing products to identify the key attributes that make products successful, and then make 'mockups' or models to test your ideas, before using a range of hard materials to create a final product.

The range of skills and knowledge developed are useful for the year 10 Hard Materials Technology course.

*Full payment is required **before the course starts** to secure your place on the course.*

[Video link](#)

\$80 subject charge

Year 9 Digital Technology (Electronics/Coding)

This course is suitable for both female and male students. Students grow digitally capable; applying computational thinking concepts and design, and using electronic components and systems, to develop digital outcomes, such as electronic games. It's a practical course, with some theory and written work.

You'll need an interest in technology, such as using computer aided design and machines. You'll use the problem solving and logical thinking skills that you might also use in Maths and Science.

The course is project-based, and uses inquiry and 'learning by doing'. It includes:

- circuit design and electronic components
- prototype boards to test electronic circuit designs and programs
- manufacturing electronic circuit boards and associated practical skills
- programming microcontrollers for a practical outcome, and Microbit coding with a link to electronics
- advanced Office Suite to enhance learning areas (eg Maths and science)

A Mac or Windows laptop with a USB port is best, although Chromebooks and iPads can be used.

*Full payment is required **before the course starts** to secure your place on the course.*

[Video link](#)

\$80 subject charge

Year 9 Fashion and Design

Technology is a University approved course and continues through to Year 13 NCEA. In this Year 9 course, you'll follow the Design Process and learn knowledge and skills to design and create items that meet a Design Brief. Specifically, you'll investigate the use of colour, digital design, and fabric decoration methods like tie dye, hand painting, applique and bead work.

You'll design and make a 'personal item', which expresses who you are through fabric, design, shape, texture and colour. You'll also be involved in a community project, which may link to MHJC e-badges, eg the Wearable Arts competition or a project for Leadership through service.

*Full payment is required **before the course starts** to secure your place on the course.*

[Video link](#)

\$80 subject charge

Line 4

Year 9 Te Ao Māori

The aim of the Te Ao Māori kaupapa is to provide students with the foundation needed to communicate in Te Reo Māori. You'll learn to communicate about yourself, your family, aspects of your home life, school life and other familiar contexts you experience in your everyday life. The course includes Tikanga Māori (values & traditions) within Whakatau, mihi, pōwhiri and Te Ao Haka (Māori Performing Arts)

Taurira (students) will learn:

- Te Reo Māori - both speaking and writing
- Tikanga Māori - Māori values and traditions in different contexts
- Te Ao Haka (Māori Performing Arts) - foundation knowledge and ideas in Te Ao Haka

[Video link](#)

No subject charge

Year 9 Spanish

There are more Spanish speakers than English speakers in the world; more than 350 million native speakers over 22 countries. In the Year 9 course, students learn both language and culture, which will enable them to also understand other Latin-based languages, like Portuguese and Italian.

You'll learn to: use Spanish to describe yourself and others, apply correct Spanish grammar, and understand Spanish and Latin-American lifestyle, festivities and traditions. Also you'll have Spanish penpal friends to write to!

You'll learn through: videos and presentations; language software such as Rockalingua, and Duolingo; interacting with other students in class; field trips in which you'll apply your conversation skills and exchange with other Spanish students from other schools in New Zealand.

[Video link](#)

No subject charge