

18 September 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been a pleasure to welcome students back after the summer break, and it has been an enjoyable first two weeks in school. As we begin the new academic year, I would like to update you on what your child will learn in school. Attached with this letter is a curriculum update that briefly outlines what students are studying in each subject this half term.

I would also like to draw your attention to our school website. You will find a series of subject tiles in the curriculum section of the website under curriculum on the drop-down menu. If you click on one of these tiles, it will take you to the subject page, where you will find an overview of the curriculum and a link to the learning journeys for each year group. The learning journey maps out what your child will study throughout the year; it shows how topics link together and where assessments are.

Students have ongoing assessments through each unit of study, such as homework, extended pieces of classwork, knowledge and vocabulary tests and end-of-topic tests. Together with more formal tests conducted in lessons between 6 - 17 November, these assessments will enable teachers to assess your child's progress. You will receive an Autumn term report on 7 December.

If you want to support your child at home with their learning, high-quality free resources such as BBC Bitesize, Seneca Learning and study videos on YouTube are an excellent place to start. Additionally, most good publishers produce a range of high-quality study and revision guides for key stages three and four. However, one of the most effective ways to support your child is to talk to them regularly about their learning. Asking children to explain what they have learned helps them to recall and think about information, which aids retention in their long-term memory. Other good ways for children to embed their learning involve summarising information in bullet point lists, making mind maps, flashcards or quick quizzes and testing themselves or having a go at additional practice questions and reviewing model answers.

The table below provides a helpful guide for the time that students should spend working at home. Students will spend some time completing homework set by the class teacher; the remainder should be independent study.

| Year Group | Per Day | Per Subject per week |
|------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 7 and 8 | 45 minutes to 1 hour | 30 minutes |
| 9 | 1 – 2 hours | 40 minutes |
| 10 and 11 | 1.5 – 2.5 hours | 60 minutes |

It is essential to make a space at home for your child to work away from distractions such as televisions, game consoles, mobile phones and other electronic devices. You can further support your child by creating a study timetable to identify times when they can work each day, planned around your family commitments.

I hope you will find this helpful in supporting your child's learning at home. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. M. McAuley
Deputy Headteacher

Year 7 Curriculum Update

Half Term 1

Art

Year 7 students will be introduced into the Formal Elements (Texture, line, tone) using natural forms as their theme. They will be introduced into a range of media and techniques when developing their drawing skills. Compulsory homework 1 is developing their artist analysis skills when looking at Van Gogh's *Starry Night*.

Design Technology

Year 7 students complete a carousel programme of study focusing on each Design and Technology area.

Textiles – Day of the Dead project skull focusing on hand sewing skills.

Graphics – Typography project focusing on hand drawing and lettering styles. Year 7 students will also learn how to use 2D design.

Food and Nutrition – Healthy eating and nutrition project where students will learn about the human body whilst cooking a range of products.

3D Design – Alice in Wonderland phone holder project developing skills using hand tools and machinery.

Computing

Year 7 students will begin their journey into Computer Science, acquiring foundational knowledge about how computers work and developing essential computer skills. They will explore key concepts such as word and data processing, desktop publishing, computational thinking, pattern recognition, and abstraction and decomposition, forming a solid basis for understanding the principles and practicalities of computing.

English

Year 7 will focus on storytelling through the ages. They will read a range of extracts of well-known stories from our literary heritage and will use these to inspire their own pieces of writing.

Geography

In geography, Students will learn the topics of introducing geography, where they focus on the types of human and physical features of our world and explore environmental issues. They will then start to look at where we are in the world on a variety of scales from continents to countries, regions and our local area.

History

In history, students complete introductory lessons on chronology, evidence, significance, causation and consequence. Students then go on to learning about the Anglo-Saxons; who they were, what life was like and who held the power.

Maths

This half term in maths pupils will begin learning about number systems including prime numbers, square number and cube numbers. Students will then progress to learn about integers, decimals and fractions, before looking at rounding, significant figures and application of the four mathematical operators with powers, roots and decimals.

Modern Foreign Languages

In French and Spanish this half term students will learn how to introduce themselves, talk about days, and months, birthdays and ages, colours, pets and school. In unit 2 students will learn to talk about their family and begin learning how to use the past and present tense.

Music

Most students in KS2 do not access Music as part of their curriculum so the majority are starting from the beginning of their journey within this subject. The first unit is linked to the main elements of music (tempo, dynamics, texture, timbre, melody, tonality and form) and basic music theory (notes of the stave in treble clef). The formal elements are a common thread throughout Music in KS3. Throughout year 7 students are expected to develop their core musical skills and sight-reading abilities in order to better access the content of years 8 and 9 alongside developing their abilities on keyboards, ukuleles and percussion instruments. They should also be able to develop an appreciation of different musical genres in order to increase their cultural capital. Independent research and critical evaluation skills are introduced in homework tasks so that students can get inspiration from not just the classroom environment, but outside of the school environment as well. Students start to develop their self-evaluation skills and increase their levels of self-efficacy in Music throughout the year as part of their assessed performances and compositions.

Physical Education

In Physical Education, the students will undergo a baseline assessment, during which they will experience a wide range of short blocks of work to enable staff to effectively gauge their current level of ability. The activities will include some of the following: football, netball, badminton, table tennis, fitness testing, dance, gymnastics, tennis, hockey, basketball and trampolining.

Religious Studies

Year 7 will follow a set of lessons to help them answer the question 'Did God create us?'. The topic will consider the creation stories in Genesis, the theories of the Big-Bang and Evolution and evaluate how Catholics can use both science and faith to give the fullest answer to this question.

Science

Year 7 will follow a set of lessons called 'Working Scientifically'. They will develop their practical skills by learning the steps involved in designing experiments. They will learn how to communicate their observations as scientists do in the real world.