

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 9 Curriculum Update

Half Term 1

Art

Year 9 students will be introduced into Pop Art. They will develop an understanding of when and why Pop art was introduced using their research skills through different sources of information. They will be introduced into 2 Pop artists Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol. They will develop mono printing repeat printing skills. Compulsory homework 1 is linked to developing their artist analysis skills when looking at Roy Lichtenstein's 'Hopeless'.

Design Technology

Year 9 students complete a carousel programme of study focusing on each Design and Technology area. Each project allows students to experience new skills and techniques ahead of KS4.

Textiles – Sweet fashion project where students will develop skills using a range of decorative techniques. Students will also learn how to produce a fashion illustration.

Graphics – Zentangle packaging project where students will design their own packaging whilst developing skills with Adobe Illustrator.

Food and Nutrition – Food science project focusing on the working properties of ingredients. Students will cook a range of dishes along with completing a food science practical investigation.

3D Design – African masks project focusing on 3D modelling skills using wood and modroc.

Computing

Year 9 students will be introduced to the intricate world of computer networks, delving into how computers interact and communicate with each other. They will learn about network hardware, protocols, and configurations, get hands-on experience setting up a network, and acquire important knowledge on network security to understand the measures needed to protect data and systems.

English

Year 9 will focus on a term-long topic of 'Identity.' In this first half term, students will study poetry related to this theme. Alongside their study of poetry, Year 9 students will practise their oracy skills by reading the play 'Blood Brothers.'

Geography

In geography, year 9 will study all about ecosystems, the nutrient cycle before focusing on the features, plants and animals found in the tropical rainforest. They will then explore the impact humans have on the tropical rainforest before coming up with ways to minimise any damage humans make.

History

In year 9, students learn about the Women's Suffrage movement; what life was like for women before early 20th Century, who campaigned for women's suffrage, their methods and how they achieved the vote.

Maths

In year 9 students will learn how to calculate with roots and indices, expand and factorise brackets, construct an angle and perpendicular line bisector and convert between compound units.

MFL

This term students will study the geography of France and Spain and learn more about the Francophone and Spanish speaking world. Students will gain an increased cultural knowledge of the French and Spanish speaking countries and develop an appreciation of other cultures.

Music

The year 9 curriculum is planned so that students complete three main projects that cover both performance and composition. The first project gives students insight into Popular music from the 1960's. The project allows students to develop their solo and ensemble performance skills across a range of instruments and stylistic genres so that they can gain appropriate and relevant knowledge of popular artists music of the 20th and 21st Centuries. They are introduced to Music for film in the spring term. Popular culture is a common thread throughout this project and gives students the opportunity to discuss and have critical debates about what is popular culture of today and how this is represented in the Music of various films and TV shows. Student will be introduced more complicated music theory including the use of dissonance and varying articulations to convey emotions to the viewer as well as 'cue sheets' which allow the student to compose to a given visual stimulus. The final project is focussed on the Music in video games and is intended to give students the opportunity to further develop their theoretical knowledge with concepts such as conjunct and disjunct melodies. Students will explore the evolution of Music in video games in reference to the development of the technology available from the 1980's to the modern day. Students will finish the unit with a composition to a visual stimulus which directly builds on learning of this and the previous topic as well as all the knowledge acquired over KS3.

Physical Education

The students will undertake activities depending upon which group they are in and which facility they are assigned. The activities will be from the following: football, netball, badminton, rugby. The students will continue to develop their ability to perform (doing), their knowledge of the activity (knowing) and how well they work individually and, in a team, (interacting).

Religious Studies

Students will study a topic on peace and conflict, learning about conflict in our own lives, religious conflict and war. They will consider if war can be justified and evaluate the use of nuclear weapons.

Science

This half term students will be studying different topics depending on which class they are in. After half term they will rotate to a new teacher and will study another topic. They will rotate once again after Christmas to study the final topics.

The topics are:

- Ecosystems and genes (Biology topics)
- Reactions and the Earth (Chemistry topics)
- Forces and magnetism (Physics topics)