



## Teaching and Learning Newsletter for Year 8

### Welcome



I am delighted to bring to you our final Teaching and Learning Newsletter of this academic year. In this edition, I have asked some Subject Leaders to look back on some of the key Teaching and Learning developments that they have been working on over the term, and to assess their impact as well as giving you, the parent or carer, some advice on how you can work in partnership with the school to support your child. Our focus has been largely about encouraging our students to become better independent learners and to provide them with the tools to achieve this. We will continue to hold this theme central to our plans for next year. As always, if you have any comments or questions, then I would love to hear from you.

Ian Henry, Assistant Headteacher

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### A word from your Year Leader

Year 8 have excelled again this year! They have accumulated the highest number of positive behaviour points, whilst also celebrating one of the lowest negative behaviour point scores in the school, maintaining their reputation as a fantastic, hardworking year group. We have seen successes across a range of elements, including sport, music, dance and drama. Highlights for me include: the 'Battle of the Bands,' where Year 8 bands battled with skills against competition from much older students; the Year 8 dance group, who were involved in the school's Easter liturgy and dance show, not to mention the huge range of sporting achievements. These include the boys' football team reaching the semi-final of the PEDSSA Cup, Year 8 netball 'A' team coming 3<sup>rd</sup> in the PEDSSA, and the 'B' team 4<sup>th</sup>, with Leah Watts and Alfie Why taking PEDSSA titles a year out of age in athletics. Unsurprisingly, these achievements saw many Year 8s being rewarded at this year's Sports Presentation Evening.



Coming up this half term, we see sports day as a big focus for Year 8. We will also have the final round of academic monitoring and reporting which will be sent home to parents or carers, this will be the last collection of data for this year. Students will also receive a tutor report as an update from their tutors, on how they have worked this year.

Looking ahead to next year, GCSE options will be the hot topic, so students should begin the process of thinking about what they might like to study in their GCSEs and perhaps even what they might wish to do Post 16, in order to make informed choices. The chance for careers appointments becomes more widely available; to help students make those informed decisions. We would hope to see a continuation of the excellent reputation that Year 8 have built for themselves in the school, and I am looking forward to seeing them move on to being highly successful Year 9s.

**Mr Wood**

### Spotlight on....

#### English

In Key Stage 3 English we have been focusing on ensuring that the way we provide feedback to students on their written work allows them to make progress. As part of this, we have been asking students to talk about the marking methods they prefer. Marking might not always be a detailed written comment from an English teacher. Other methods include: success criteria grids that are highlighted to show skills that have been reached, teachers displaying high quality work from the students to show what they are aiming for, and teachers marking errors for students to correct.



## Spotlight on.....

### **Geography**

Year 8 are to finish their 'Tectonic Hazards' topic before commencing a topic which will get them to consider energy resources.

The Geography department has been trialling flipped learning with the aim of making it the recognised way of working from September 2018 for all year groups. We have already seen the benefits with classes at Key Stage 3 of learning content 2 weeks ahead as this then frees up lesson time for completing higher order application tasks. This approach also compliments the shifting focus at Key stage 4 and 5 where more marks in the examinations are awarded for application and evaluation than for knowledge.

You can continue to support your child by encouraging them to access the guided independent learning materials available via the school website. We will begin to shift away from using Padlet to our own Sharepoint site. It will benefit students enormously to be familiar with materials prior to studying them in class as this will enable them to move on to more complex ideas at a faster rate. We would welcome your views upon this new site, to help us to build it in a way that best supports our students.



### **History**

This year in history, we have looked at encouraging students in Year 8 to take more responsibility for their own learning by providing them with knowledge organisers for regular use as part of their home learning strategies. Students have been set regular knowledge tests and have been encouraged to make use of the key words, people and themes as outlined on their knowledge organisers. This strategy is designed to build confidence in using technical vocabulary and front loading knowledge to support classroom thinking and discussion.

This term Year 8 will be looking at the Industrial Revolution in Britain: its causes, the key events and inventions, and its impact on the lives of ordinary Britons. In particular, we will look at the conditions in factories and the campaign for worker's rights and better living and working conditions.

To support your child in getting the most out of this topic encourage them to watch the 'Absolute Genius' series (presented by Dick and Dom, available on YouTube) for key inventions. Students will also be provided with a knowledge organiser of key dates, events, people and themes. Testing them regularly on this information will support them with the work they complete in the classroom.

### **Religious Education**

In RE this year we have been working with students on developing the key skills of Independent Learning through developing some simple flipped learning strategies which encourage students to improve their knowledge through self-directed tasks carried out on their own. We have also been encouraging students to learn ahead of what we are covering in lesson, in order to have key knowledge when they enter the room. We can then spend time exploring this in depth and developing our own opinion on these key topics.

We feel it is incredibly important to spend time looking after ourselves and in particular our mental health. We explore how the different religions around the world offer support through difficult times, and how faith can support those in crisis. Year 8 have explored how the New Covenant in Christianity can offer support for those today who feel vulnerable, reflecting on how such a promise might have an impact in their life.

In order to support your child in their studies in RE, you could engage them in conversations around current issues in the world, to get interested in current affairs and to explore their own beliefs, whatever these may be. If they complete their home learning within the allotted time, you may also encourage them to spend some time on the BBC World Faiths website, exploring different issues and religions which may interest them. They can then bring this into lesson to lead discussions or ask questions around the topics. You may also wish to encourage them to attempt the more difficult tasks on their home learning task sheet to extend their learning.

## Summer Term Topics and Assessments

Year	Topic Title	Main Assessment Task	Deadline (if known)
English	'Romeo and Juliet'	End of term assessment task.	July
Maths	Statistical measures, Probability, Graphs and Constructions. This will follow on from Year 7 topics with recap and increased difficulty	End of term assessment	End of June
Science	Forces Pressure and density  EXPO	Written tests completed in class for all topics listed using past KS3 science questions  EXPO is a poster presentation usually completed in pairs of students	Mid June  Mid July
MFL	French: My talents and future plans.  German: Making plans for the future.	End of year assessment in reading and writing	
Art	Portraits and Picasso	Portfolio of work published	July
Computing	Introduction to Python	Independently create a program to take an input and produce an output	
Drama	Comedy	Perform polished improvisations from given stimulus.	Between 6-20 <sup>th</sup> July
Music	Blues	Performance of blues composition in pairs or groups	
PE	Summer activities	Students are taking part in a variety of sports over this term the sports could be tennis, rounders, athletics, softball	The assessments are made at the end of each teaching block.
Technology	Crazy Creature Hats  Festivals of Light: Mood Light  Come cook with me  Carbohydrates and Nutrients	Design and making of final product	

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