



THE MOUNTBATTEN SCHOOL

HMC/SCG

September 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

We would like to congratulate Year 9 on a really great start to the new term.

We know that there is always a lot of information when you start a new school year. To make things easier for you, we have streamlined communication to reduce email traffic as we know that this can be overwhelming and emails can all too easily get lost in inboxes.

The rest of this letter provides important information from other areas of the school – you may want to save it somewhere safe for future reference.

Our new school website will be launched later this term. We shall also be sending out a weekly newsletter; this is currently in the final stages of development and we hope will further improve communication between school and home.

Don't forget to follow our school social media accounts on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). Instagram has additional content, letting you see the daily life of Mountbatten through the 'stories' feature. You can see the best of these in our 'highlights'.

Why not make a cup of tea, settle into the sofa and peruse the latest updates from around the school.

Yours sincerely

Heather McIlroy
Executive Headteacher

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Head of Year Message

A very warm welcome back Year 9. This coming year will be exciting and engaging because you will now be starting your GCSE course in many subjects. The options you chose at the end of Year 8 has given you the first opportunity to control your destiny. Year 9 is the coming of age year where students transition from Lower School to Upper School. Therefore, we are looking for our students to become active role models in the school. An active life within school, including extra-curricular clubs, will ensure we continue to demonstrate and develop the key behaviours of the 3D curriculum.

Students who work hard and meet challenges head on, with resilience and determination, will ensure the best possible foundations for Year 10 and 11. If there is one piece of advice I can give it is this: start Year 9 as you would like to finish Year 11. There is no room for complacency and it is far easier to maintain a good level of effort for three years than try and raise your standards in the last months of school.

As always, the brilliant tutor team will be there to assist and support everyone in every aspect of your life in school.

Mr Ravenhill
Head of Year

Key Dates:

Wednesday 22 September - *INSET day*

Friday 26 November – *INSET day*

Thursday 13 January - *Year 9 Options Evening*

Thursday 27 January – *Year 9 Parents Evening*

Monday 28 February – *INSET day*

Monday 20 June – *INSET day*

Autumn Term

Half Term 25 October – 29 October

Term Ends Friday 17 December

Spring Term

Term Starts Tuesday 4 January

Half Term 21 February – 25 February

Term Ends Friday 8 April

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Summer Term

Term Starts: Monday 25 April
Half Term: 30 May – 3 June
Term Ends: Tuesday 19 July

English

Our Lower School curriculum has been carefully crafted to help students develop their love of literature whilst effectively preparing them for their GCSEs. Year 9s study texts linked via the theme of identity and power. Students study a full novel, two plays and poetry. They begin by studying the 20th Century play *An Inspector Calls*. In year 9, students study a number of full texts and are taught extended and academic writing skills mirroring the style of learning that will take place throughout their GCSEs. Students are taught how to understand and apply the social and historical contexts relevant to the texts they study – from the changes to the Edwardian class system in *An Inspector Calls* to the history of witchcraft in *Macbeth*. This is a key skill students are required to apply in English Literature GCSE. Students are also taught how to improve their transactional and creative writing.

All students are set weekly homework. Every week, students are set 10 vocabulary words to learn. Students are expected to learn the meaning of these words using the website Quizlet. Every week, their teacher will post a link to these words via Google Classroom. Quizlet allows students to use a variety of techniques to learn their meaning; these will be tested in class every week. Students should also attempt to learn the correct spelling of the word but teachers will always focus on testing the meaning. We encourage students to create a Quizlet account using their school email address. This allows their teachers to see what revision has been done as homework and can support students who find learning new words difficult to demonstrate their efforts. One other homework related to the curriculum will be set by teachers each week. Further information and deadlines are available via Google Classroom.

Maths

Year 9 will be taught in sets. They will receive a standardised written weekly homework that focuses on the retention of key skills. Details of each week's homework will be explained verbally in class and shared on Google Classroom. The expectation is that homework should be completed with full workings in the back of the student's exercise book. It is essential that clear workings are included so that students can effectively communicate their thinking (and earn maximum marks in exams!).

Science

Students have now started studying the material they will be examined on in their GCSEs. Details of the topics covered and material used to support revision and lessons can be found on the [science student website](#).

At the end of this year a combination of examination results and attitude to learning throughout the year will be used to decide which students will study AQA Combined Science Trilogy GCSE leading to the award of two GCSEs and which will follow a course designed to prepare them to take the examinations for AQA GCSE Biology, AQA GCSE Chemistry and AQA GCSE Physics - this route is

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sometimes referred to as separate sciences. This decision is entirely outside the options process and has no impact on the other combinations of subjects that can be studied. Your child's teacher will be able to give you an idea of which route your child will follow at the parents' evening in the Spring Term and this will be confirmed after the summer exams. More information about the qualifications, timing/content of the exams and setting can be found at [this link](#).

In accordance with the school's homework policy, students are expected to spend 40-60 minutes completing Science homework each week. This will predominantly involve the preparation of revision materials and completion of quizzes designed to help students remember key content. The revision material produced this year will be useful in Year 10 and 11 so we are encouraging students to develop good [study habits](#) by creating a revision folder to store this material to avoid the need for duplication later on. It would be very helpful if you could encourage your child to keep this folder well organised and up to date. Additional detail about Science homework can be found [here](#).

If you have any additional queries please contact your child's Science teacher.

Music

The benefits of learning a musical instrument are well documented, and include improved academic attainment, social mobility and a sense of wellbeing. For this reason, in an ideal world, Mountbatten School would like every child to be learning an instrument. It is not too late to request music tuition for your son or daughter!

The Music Department offers lessons on a wide variety of instruments and voice. We have some instruments which are available to hire.

The lessons cost £95 per term (£120 for individual piano lessons). Students eligible for Pupil Premium funding pay half this amount. If you have signed up for music lessons, they should be paid as per the details on your contract via your SCOPAY account.

Please contact the Music Department for more information
clare.loadman@mountbatten.hants.sch.uk or complete a Music Tuition Contract [form](#).

History

This term, students will be learning about some of the most significant events of the Second World War, exploring the life of Winston Churchill and examining the causes and events of the Cold War. All homework and resources will be available on Google Classroom.

All Year 9 students are welcome to attend The History Club which will run one afternoon break each week. Please ask your History teacher for more details.

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Religious Education (RE)

We are very excited for Year 9 to move to three lessons a week and start enquiring, in more depth, the philosophical issues for Autumn Term.

Each week the students will be set a homework, this will be on Google Classroom in addition to the students writing it in their planners. All resources that the students need will be on Google Classroom and if you need anything please get in touch with your class teacher.

Geography

During the first term of Year 9, students will investigate the role and impact of the tourism industry in driving improvements and development at different scales. Not only does this unit provide several links to a variety of career paths but will also allow for students to consider the impacts of Covid-19 on the tourism industry. Early in the Autumn Term, Year 9 students will also visit the New Forest National Park to collect fieldwork data to assess the impact of tourism in our local national park. A letter will follow shortly.

We encourage our students to engage with Geography in the news as this will closely link with what we study in class and will deepen their geographical understanding. All lesson and homework resources are available on Google Classroom.

Physical Education (PE)

Year 9 are taught in sets and will follow a curriculum specific for their set. During the academic year students will take part in six sports one per half term.

At the end of each unit of work students will complete a practical assessment.

Our extra-curricular programme offers students the opportunity to take part in a raft of sports. We strongly encourage students to get involved in a club to engage them physically, socially and mentally. You can find what sports we have on offer through our PE [website](#).

The majority of the clubs are free to access and students will receive tuition from an experienced staff body and external coaches.

Design and Technology (D&T)

In recent years we have asked parents to support the work we do by making a voluntary financial contribution towards the costs of the students' project work (Graphics, Resistant Materials and Textiles). This enables students to keep the project work they make when it is finished. It also lets them embark on some costly project work that normally would not be possible.

We are very grateful for the continued support of parents at The Mountbatten School and would like to ask for parental support again this year. Please could we ask that you make a voluntary contribution of £15.00 in support of your child's work. We cannot stress enough that this support is greatly

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appreciated and does make a big difference to what we can offer to your child in terms of their Design and Technology experience. If you are unable to pay the full amount, then any payment will be greatly received.

To maximise your donation, we are going to be claiming gift aid. In doing so the school will benefit from additional income. You can make your donation via your SCOPAY account by clicking on 'Design & Tech Contribution 21/22'. And if you are happy for us to claim the gift aid on your donation please click the link here and complete the google [form](#).

Food Technology

Students studying Food Technology will be required to bring ingredients to their practical lessons. Teachers will inform students about what is needed one week in advance. This will form one part of their Design and Technology rotation. We ask that ingredients are weighed out at home and are brought to school in suitably sized containers for storage. Please could you also ensure that your child is provided with an empty container to take their cooked food home in and that this is clearly labelled with their full name and tutor group.

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind parents/carers and students that our Food Technology classrooms are 'nut free', so please ensure that no nut products are sent in with ingredients.

Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)

Our Lower School schemes of work have been written with the view of developing our students' communication skills, encourage collaborative work and collaborative thinking, problem solving and resilience and build in curiosity for the wider world.

In Year 9, our students are asked to put their existing knowledge to use by starting to create longer and more complex pieces of work and be creative in their thinking in order to reuse a wider range of language. As reading and listening tasks become more challenging, students' resilience and independence is being tested and developed constantly.

In Year 9, students will be expected to complete 2 homework tasks lasting 40-45 minutes each week. One will be vocabulary learning from the latest vocabulary list in their blue exercise book. The vocabulary homework each week will be tested in class to check learning. The second piece of homework will be a practice task usually set on Google Classroom with all the resources required.

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Updates from around the school

The Library

It is fantastic to welcome everyone back to the Library and meet all our new Year 7 students. We are open before tutor time, at morning and afternoon breaks for students to browse and change books. Every student can borrow 3 books for 3 weeks. We are passionate about loaning out our wide selection of vibrant books to our school community. Equally, we need students to develop good habits of personal responsibility and return or renew their library books on time, thus ensuring that a comprehensive range is available for all our students to choose from.

Epraise

Last year, we introduced a new system called 'epraise' in our school. This software is designed to improve student engagement and motivation and to support parental involvement. It's proved really popular with teachers, parents/carers and students alike.

We would like to remind parents/carers that you too can have an epraise account to access information about your child. There is a great app so that you can receive notifications when they receive an epraise point, demerit or detention on your phone.

Please use the email address you have given us to set up an account. Hopefully you will find this process straight forward and easy. Please see our [FAQ guide](#) if you do experience any problems. There is also a parent guide to epraise [here](#) and a useful video about how to get started with epraise [here](#).

Finance

A link to SCOPAY can be found on the school website.

Please contact finance@mountbatten.hants.sch.uk with any problems or queries. You need to make sure that you only buy the items you need, there will be items available to purchase that may not be relevant to your child.

Calculators and filled pencil cases are available to purchase via SCOPAY for all students at all times. We will endeavour to deliver the purchases to your child within the week, but this may at times take longer.

If you wish to change the daily limit of spending on your child's cashless catering account, you should write a note in their planner for your child to show the catering team.

IT Services

We would like to share a '[Parent Guide to Google Classroom](#)'. Google Classroom is an online platform that we use to set homework and will be used weekly by all staff and students. As a guardian, you can get email summaries about your student's activity in Classroom.

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SIMS Parent is a system to view detailed information about your child(ren). We have shared a '[Parent Guide to SIMS Parent](#)' which goes into detail about setting up an account. IT Services will send an invitation email to create an account on Monday.

If you have any IT issues or require any assistance, please contact IT Services at itservices@mountbatten.hants.sch.uk

Lockers

We have a limited number of lockers available for students. These are prioritised for GCSE PE students. If you would like to arrange a locker for your child, please contact attendance@mountbatten.hants.sch.uk.

Support with online homework

As you will know, school homework is increasingly set online. This has presented problems for some households, especially over the lockdown periods, but also during 'normal' times. We want to make sure that none of our students are disadvantaged by this and that we are doing our best to support households where it is needed. We have written a short questionnaire to ask parents/carers to tell us about the IT equipment their child is able to use at home and the quality of their Internet access.

We would really appreciate you completing this [linked questionnaire](#) to help us get an idea of any problems there are and what action might be needed. All responses will be treated in strict confidence and not shared with anybody outside of our school.

This questionnaire is very similar to the one we sent out in the last summer term. Please only complete it if you have not completed a questionnaire like this before, or your circumstances have changed since then.

Lateral Flow Tests

The Department for Education has issued guidance stating that home testing should continue. Tutors have distributed a new home test kit. We are asking that all students complete a lateral flow test every Wednesday and Sunday evening. Please report your result to [NHS Test and Trace](#) and the school's [Google Form](#). Following a positive LFD test at home, a confirmatory PCR test should be booked online and the student should self-isolate while awaiting the result.

Transport

Bluestar have informed us that they have been keeping a close eye on the 654 and it is still struggling with traffic on Winchester Road. Therefore they are going to retime the morning 654 journey to start 5minutes earlier from this Monday 13 September 2021. A revised timetable can be found [here](#).

To confirm:

- the 504 will be unchanged;
- the morning 654 will leave Chilworth 5 minutes earlier;
- the afternoon 654 will be unchanged.

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